

Thursday May 21 1998

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How acid house became instant history

G2 with European weather



The section that serves you right

Consumer

Digital TV: take your pick

G2 pages 10-11

OnLine

Money for old chips

G2 pages 12-13

Storm engulfs freed nurses

Kamal Ahmed, Rory Carroll and Ian Black

THE RELEASE of two British nurses from Saudi Arabia last night after a frenzied newspaper bidding war for their stories and the release of extracts of shocking diaries they kept in prison in Saudi Arabia.

The women, whose convictions for murdering Yvonne Gilford still stand, have already made £160,000 after signing deals with the Mirror and Express newspapers. The Mirror is understood to have paid more than £100,000 for exclusive rights to McLauchlan's story, while the Express has paid £60,000 in a deal with Parry.

Diplomatic sources said the payments would anger the Saudi authorities. Both women are expected to use the newspaper deals to reveal their hatred of the Saudi regime and protest their innocence.

The Press Complaints Commission has launched an inquiry into the deals after a complaint that they breached its rules on payments to convicted criminals. "Criminals are not supposed to profit from their crimes," said George Gallop, the Labour MP who made the complaint.

The first extracts of the diaries alleging sexual abuse by Saudi prison officers were released last night. They will be part of a BBC Panorama documentary tonight.

The diaries, written by McLauchlan and Parry during their imprisonment, claim that Saudi guards sexually assaulted them during their five-day interrogation about the murder of Gilford in 1996. They allege that confessions were beaten out of them.

Writing about a Major Hammed, the head of the Saudi investigation, McLauchlan said: "[He] keeps pulling my hair. I'm positive they are going to rape me. Hammed tells me: 'Do you start writing or does the lieutenant take his trousers off?'"

Parry, who was questioned in a separate room, said she was also frightened that she was going to be raped. "They were rubbing my thighs, I thought I would be raped by them all," she wrote. "I was so frightened, then the hitting started. Kept on being struck across the throat, my face was slapped, was told that if I didn't start writing it would be worse."

Full house for Sinatra as he faces final curtain

Martin Kettle in Los Angeles

FRANK Sinatra took his final curtain last night when he was buried next to his parents in a bronze-lined vault in the California desert following a Beverly Hills funeral attended by the cream of Hollywood.



Police Montano, a fan of Frank Sinatra, with a card distributed at yesterday's funeral service

DPP bows out after Whitehall pressure

Clare Dyer and Anne Perkins

DAME Barbara Mills last night bowed to mounting pressure and announced that she is stepping down early as Director of Public Prosecutions in advance of a damning report into her command of the Crown Prosecution Service.



A second report, by retired circuit judge Gerald Butler, also unpublished, is thought to accuse the service of being too soft on rogue policemen who injure or kill suspects. Judge Butler was asked to look into CPS decision-making on prosecuting police last July after two cases of deaths in custody, in which Dame Barbara admitted the process was flawed, and a third in which the High Court said a CPS decision not to prosecute a suspect was one no reasonable prosecutor could have made.

But after she came under strong pressure from the Attorney General, John Morris, she agreed to go to clear the way for a radical reorganisation of the CPS.

Her six-year stint as head of the service has been dogged by controversy. Staff surveys revealed rock-bottom morale, with lawyers complaining that tides of paperwork stopped them working on cases efficiently.

After pressure from Mr Morris and the Solicitor General, Lord Falconer, Dame Barbara agreed to restrictions on her right to take decisions on prosecutions over assaults by police pending the outcome of the Butler inquiry.

A report by the retired Court of Appeal judge Sir Iain Glidewell, which has been delivered to ministers, heralds an overhaul of the CPS. The report is expected to be published immediately after MPs return from the Whitsun break next month.

Privately, there is relief in Whitehall that she has been persuaded to resign. Ministers felt any attempt at a fresh start in the CPS would be impossible if she stayed, and she compounded the problem by making it clear she disagreed with Sir Iain's findings.

She is expected to be replaced by Sir Iain's successor.

The mourners
Barbara Sinatra (widow)
Frank Jr
Nancy, Tina (daughters)
Mia Farrow (ex-wife)
Joey Bishop
Gregory Peck
Shirley MacLaine
Robert Wagner
Tony Bennett
Bob Dylan
Johnny Carson

Don Rickles
Kirk Douglas
Jerry Lewis
Steve Lawrence
Elyse Gornik
Frankie Valli
Norm Crosby
Ernest Borgnine
Lisa Minnelli
Tom Selleck
Quincy Jones

dozens of white gardenias, was transported there by undertakers in readiness for yesterday's funeral mass. A three-piece band of musicians who had played with Sinatra over the years, performed a medley of his classics, including Night and Day, Young at Heart and the inevitable My Way.

After the funeral, Sinatra's coffin, accompanied by his widow Barbara and his children, was taken by private jet for an even more private interment ceremony at the California desert resort of Cathedral City, near Palm Springs. The coffin was decked in the Stars and Stripes and was carried by a military guard of

CHILDREN IN SUDAN ARE DYING

She's exhausted and starving, but she's walked all day to bring her grandchild to a relief centre. She may be too late.

Civil war and drought have brought thousands of children to the brink of death in Sudan. Malnourished, exhausted and sick, they are in desperate need of help. As the lead agency coordinating relief efforts in southern Sudan, UNICEF is providing high-energy foods, medical supplies and shelter to as many as possible. But every day more children move closer to starvation.

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Sketch

Early pledges get the bird



Simon Hoggart

MR R. SMITHSON writes from Downham Road, London E8, to complain about the way I seem to think that William Hague always wins his weekly exchanges with Tony Blair at Prime Minister's Question Time.

Mr Smithson says that he is a lifelong Tory, but finds himself "completely happy with Mr Blair". The country, he believes, is being governed as well as it ever has been. "I am convinced that he will keep his promises and life will be vastly improved... he is the most persuasive, plausible, completely believable PM in history. And in no time at all he has foreign politicians eating out of his hand."

At this point I began to get a little suspicious. I know that Alastair Campbell has recently written under the names of the Prime Minister of Japan and the President of Sierra Leone. But Mr R. Smithson of E8 is new.

On checking, I discover that there is no R. Smithson in the phone book and no Downham Road in E8. There is, however, a Downham Road not far away, in Islington. My case, such as it is, rests.

I fear that once again, *pace* Mr Smithson, the Tory leader defeated Mr Blair soundly in argument yesterday. It wasn't very difficult. Mr Blair is tired; he is doing too much. All heads of government confuse action with achievement. He should spend more time in Downing Street, thinking. Or just napping.

Mr Hague asked him about hospital waiting lists. Mr Blair admitted that they were indeed rising, but he had pledged to reduce them "and reduce them we will."

Mr Hague pointed out that, whereas their reduction had been one of Labour's "early pledges", listed on a wallet-sized card for the election, the number of people waiting for

treatment had actually risen by 130,000.

The Prime Minister replied that the Government was putting an extra £2 billion into the NHS, and would do more when prudence permitted. (I see her as one of those women who advertise in phone boxes. Prudence. Strict Financial Discipline Enforced.)

Mr Hague pointed out that he had made a similar "early pledge" about class sizes, which were also increasing. "You promised, as an early pledge, low interest rates and low inflation, and it's now at a six-year high."

"Don't you wish you had given a pledge to bring chaos to the Foreign Office, and then at least one minister would have delivered! Don't you understand that when you call them 'early' pledges, people thought you meant early in the Parliament, not early in the next century."

The gist of Mr Blair's reply was that all these unpleasant phenomena — rising inflation, class sizes and waiting lists — had been around for a long time under the Conservatives, and there wasn't very much that he could do about it in the short term.

But in which case, why did they promise that they would? My objection to this lot isn't that they aren't miracle workers, but that in order to get elected, they claimed that they could be.

The unspoken part of Mr Blair's replies always seems to be: "Surely, you don't confuse what we said we'd do with what we can do? What kind of naïf are you?"

Soon afterwards, a backbencher, Eric Martlew of Carlisle, asked the Prime Minister if he didn't think that, after the people of Britain had supported Ulster for 30 years (directly, he is doing too much), there might be a "backlash" on the mainland if Ulster said No tomorrow.

Mr Blair replied amiably enough that even if they did say No, the UK Government would "be ready to take the matter forward". But Labour backbench questions are rather like dreams these days — they express what the Government's subconscious is really thinking. Dr Freud tells me that Mr Martlew's question really means: "It'll be time at last to ditch the whingeing bastards."

Review

Empty monsters without magic

Andrew Clements

Monsters of Grace

TWENTY-TWO years ago Philip Glass and Robert Wilson collaborated on a stage work, and contemporary opera was never the same again. Einstein on the Beach combined Glass's music, then in its most austere minimalist phase, with Wilson's magical, mysterious imagery to produce a show of total synthesis, the visual and the aural mutually dependent. In *Monsters of Grace* they are working together for the first time since that project, and it launches the Barbican's International Theatre Event, which runs for 22 weeks.

But if the Barbican thought it had landed a coup with this British premiere which it partly commissioned, times have changed: on this evidence the Glass-Wilson mix has lost its power to enchant, leaving us with a piece of total emptiness. *Monsters* lasts just 70 minutes, yet seems far longer than Wagner's *Parsifal*, with far fewer jokes.

Though Glass still has his faithful band of followers, who will lap up his music however banal and second-hand, the selling point of this show is its visuals.

Conventionally staged scenes, full of Wilson's familiar entranced movements and surreal juxtapositions, are alternated with computer-generated video projections for which the audience is supplied with 3-D spectacles, while the score is played and sung live in the pit by the Philip Glass Ensemble, con-

ducted by Michael Riesman. There is no narrative, just 13 self-contained scenes, with the texts taken from the 18th-century Anatolian poet, Jalaluddin Rumi, in desperately flat translations from the Persian by Coleman Barks. ("The singing art is sea foam, the graceful movements come from a pearl, somewhere on the sea floor.") There is no direct relationship between the stage and the musical settings, and the audience has to take Wilson's imagination on trust.

But if Glass's queasy music, full of predictable harmonies and mis-stressed vocal lines, is never likely to transcend itself, the greatest disappointment comes from the 3-D video, which never even measures up to the quality of a computer game.

A disembodied hand rotating in space and pierced by needles and cut by a knife, a sleeping polar bear prodded by an anonymous finger, helicopters flying across a mountain range, are all momentarily intriguing but almost immediately become quite empty of significance.

Working with actors, Wilson shows he is a magician, still capable of conjuring immense ungraspable power from a child walking across a stage, or a woman dangling her hand in a tank of water. The trouble is that in *Monsters* those visions carry no meaning beyond their beauty; the music simply isn't strong enough to provide a real counterpoint, and the whole turns out to be far less than the sum of its pretentious and vacuous parts.

This review appeared in later editions yesterday.

US pulls plug on Suharto after army clears streets

Andrew Higgins in Jakarta and Mark Tran in New York

SHADOWED by the deserted skyscrapers of Jakarta's business district, unruly football players yesterday plunged into a menacing tranquillity by the most potent military display in an Asian capital since the Tiananmen Square massacre.

Near the Hilton hotel, a mile away, students reinforced their occupation of Indonesia's no longer impotent parliament.

And, after a day of both eerie order and defiant rebellion, President Suharto last night received a blunt ultimatum from the head of his own ruling party: resign by Friday or face impeachment. Further pressure came from his once zealous backers in Washington. The United States secretary of state, Madeleine Albright, urged Asia's longest-serving ruler to "preserve his legacy by stepping down."

The shift in US policy will come as a body blow. Until now, the Clinton administration had said only that Mr Suharto should implement political reform. Mrs Albright's statement indicated that the US believes his days are numbered, and that he should go peacefully. She said: "Now he has an opportunity for an historic act of statesmanship by stepping down." Her words were reminiscent of the language used by US officials when they urged President Ferdinand Marcos of the Philippines to quit.

With much of Jakarta under effective martial law, the opposition leader, Amien Rais, called off a planned "people's power" rally in Merdeka (Liberty) Square, in front of the presidential palace. But instead of silencing a swelling chorus calling for Mr Suharto to go, a military display that left intersections clogged with barbed wire and flyovers studied with tanks only widened the rift between the president and his more than 200 million people.

Mr Rais abandoned what he hoped would be a million-strong march after a late-night drive around the planned



A Jakarta youth passes troops and tanks when ringed the city centre yesterday. But students continued to occupy the parliament PHOTOGRAPH: MAYA VIDON

venue, the focus of the military's massive pre-dawn deployment, and a warning from a general that the military "did not care if an accident like Tiananmen Square happens".

Many in the city, fearing a repeat of last week's orgy of destruction, breathed a sigh of relief. There was no relief for Mr Suharto. In his home town of Yogyakarta, the cultural capital of Java, up to quarter of a million protesters took to the streets. The industrial city of Surabaya endured a spasm of violence by troops dispersing protesters.

In Jakarta, the speaker of the House of Representatives, Mr Harmoko, and leaders of the assembly's four factions promised students they would

call a special session next Monday to set in motion the machinery of a constitutional coup if Mr Suharto does not quit by tomorrow.

The man who styles himself the Father of Development but now presides over a catastrophic economic and political implosion had a day earlier gone on television to promise new elections — but no timetable — in the hope of defusing the crisis. Yesterday, he retreated to the protection of his elite special forces.

But other troops, loyal to other commanders, smiled and even cheered busloads of protesting students on their way to parliament.

"There is only one stage left — the stand of the army

towards Suharto," Mr Rais, the Islamic leader, told students encamped in the parliamentary compound. "The army has two clear choices: protect a family that has got very rich over many years or join the people now."

Throughout the day calls for Mr Suharto's resignation belled across the parliamentary grounds, occupied by thousands of students and strung with banners. The rhetoric grew as heated as the sun, dampened only in mid-afternoon by a sudden downpour.

On a podium bedecked with a sign saying "Hang Suharto", speakers denounced the president. "Does Suharto deserve to live in this country? When he

dies, does he even deserve to be buried in this country?" screamed one. A more moderate voice prevailed after the rain, urging students to come down from the roof. An architect had warned it might collapse.

Along with the buses that poured into the complex from campuses across the city, unmolested by a cheery phalanx of troops at the gates, arrived vans and trucks carrying supplies to feed the occupying army of students. Ahur Udin, the volunteer driver of a van stuffed with bananas and water, said he had taken time off work in a government ministry to help. "Until Suharto goes we will keep coming."

But the huge number of soldiers on the streets outside parliament — reports on their number ranged from 40,000 to 150,000 — and the din of helicopters overhead, left no doubt about the danger lurking behind the students' caraval. A throng of onlookers gathered outside the parliamentary complex, many of them drawn from impoverished nearby neighbourhoods that fuelled last week's looting, provided another reminder of the volatile forces far beyond the students' control. It is even unclear whether the students, blighted by the division and disorganisation that plague their elders, can control their own numbers.

Army's hard fist, page 6

Resignations hit Arts Council reforms

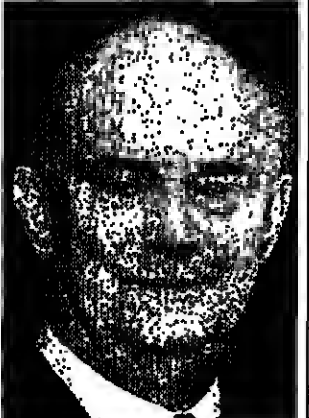
Dan Gialister Arts Correspondent

SOME of the leading names in British theatre, including the playwright Sir Alan Ayckbourn, dealt a blow yesterday to the Government's attempts to reform the Arts Council when they resigned in protest.

Among the 15 members of the drama advisory panel who quit were Jude Kelly, the director of the West Yorkshire Playhouse, Sam Mendes, director of the Donmar Warehouse, and senior figures from the Royal Shakespeare Company, the Royal National Theatre and the Barbican Centre. The panel is chaired by the West End producer Thelma Holt.

The resignations were announced at the monthly meeting of the Arts Council's ruling body — the second meeting under the new chairman, Gerry Robinson, the chief executive of Granada.

As expected, the 23-member council body, the ruling body in known, also resigned to make



Alan Ayckbourn, one of 15 drama members who quit

way for a slimmed-down body of 10 to 12 members.

Other art form panels are to meet in the next few days to decide on their course of action. Should they follow suit and resign en masse, it would mark an unprecedented loss of expertise for the Arts Council.

The decision to resign is in protest at the removal of art

form panel representation on the ruling council. Under the new structure, drawn up by the new chief executive, Peter Hewitt, panel chairmen will not automatically have a place on the council.

Although this move has been accepted, the drama panel has been angered by proposals which mean that it will not necessarily be consulted about decisions that affect the theatre sector. Instead, the chairman or chief executive of the Arts Council will be able to invite representatives from the arts panels at their discretion. They will seek advice, not instruction, from the various panels.

The panels, one for each of the major art forms, each number around 15 members, all of whom provide their services voluntarily.

"These proposals sever the umbilical cord between the artists and the funding body," said Ms Holt. "We won't be party to the decision-making process. It smacks of the panels being used as scapegoats for decisions to which they have not been party. They are more interested in the ef-

ficient running of it than the creative process."

Other drama panel members have expressed their dissatisfaction with the separation between the artist and decisions on funding. In a letter to be published today signed by the entire drama panel, they complain that the art form panels will be "mere talking shops" and the result "a bureaucracy less accountable, less accessible and in-

creasingly remote from artists and audiences."

Roger Chapman, head of touring at the National Theatre, said: "If you have an organisation in which decisions are made by people who are not artists and who do not consult with people in the industry, there will be some very strange decisions."

The Arts Council and the Department of Culture refused to comment.

Deborah MacMillan, the chair of the dance panel, said: "Gerry Robinson has some very good ideas, but I don't think he understands quite how complicated it is. And what angers me is that he hasn't bothered to find out. Behind it all is the Department of Culture. The arms-length principle has been cut off up to the armpit."

Hugo Young, page 8

DAN AYKROYD JOHN GOODMAN



BLUES BROTHERS 2000

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سكنا من الاميل

Police fear new wave of terror as gunmen snatch three Old Masters

John Hooper and Philip Willan report from Rome on a puzzling robbery

A DEPRESSIVE gardener and a 40-year-old cafe owner's wife were last night apparently being held hostage after one of the most daring, successful and puzzling art thefts of recent years.

Maria Ginoux and the sad-faced peasant who tended the grounds of the asylum at San Remo were both depicted by Vincent van Gogh in the final months of his life in and around Arles. Their paintings, together with Cezanne's unfinished masterpiece *Le Cabanon de Jourdan*, were found to have been seized by masked gunmen from Italy's National Museum of Modern Art early yesterday.

So far, all the signs are that this was no ordinary theft. The works stolen are too famous to be resold, and the available evidence suggested they were being held either to extort a ransom or secure as yet unspecified concessions from the Italian state.

Art experts said it was almost impossible to put a figure on the value of the haul. But one of the works, *The Gardener*, was thought to be worth £15 million.

Police were trying to authenticate a call to one of Italy's smaller news agencies yesterday. An unaccented male voice said: "We shall let you know all the conditions, including the political ones, for the return of the Van Goghs and the Cezanne."

Paul Cezanne's last oil work, painted in 1906, and Van Gogh's *The Gardener* and *L'Arlésienne*, which date from 1889 and 1890 respectively,

have aspects in common, though nothing that offers an immediate explanation for the theft. All are post-impressionist masterpieces. All were painted just before the artist's death.

In addition, though, one has a controversial history linking it indirectly to the assassinated Italian politician, Aldo Moro. The twentieth anniversary of his murder by the Red Brigades was marked with a bout of nationwide soul-searching earlier this month.

The robbery exposed gross security lapses and an embarrassing degree of police negligence.

The gallery was protected by three unarmed women guards

The gallery, which stands just outside the Villa Borghese park, tends to be overshadowed by the many in Rome displaying treasures from earlier periods. Yet it houses one of Italy's most important collections.

At the time of the robbery, its protection was entrusted to three unarmed women guards. The alarm system was not connected to the police, and the closed circuit TV cameras were out of order.

The alarm was raised by the manager of a bar attached to the gallery, yet his attempts to call the police emergency number elicited no response. In the end, he had to stop a passing patrol car.



Van Gogh's *The Gardener* and *L'Arlésienne* which may have been stolen to extort a ransom. *The Gardener* was valued at £15 million in 1988



Mystery of 349 missing Picassos

Owen Bowcott

CONNOISSEURS of detective novels may linger over the image of the purloined Impressionist canvases being contemplated by a monocled aesthete in the secrecy of his private castle.

The truth is likely to be less literary. Few of the hundreds of works of art which disappear from galleries each year are stolen to order for a criminal collector's secure back room.

Instead, they are wrapped up and put into bank vaults where they are stored, or sold on again, as collateral for cash in drug deals. Too easily identified Old Masters and modernist masterpieces are difficult to sell at auction.

"Sometimes they are taken to be ransomed," said Caroline Wakeford of the Art Loss Register, which maintains a database of missing works from around the world. "Often they are used as a form of currency between villains. The paintings sit in a bank vault and are used in a form of barter economy."

Evidence of private collectors' commissioning gangs to remove rare paintings from public collections

is hard to find. In 1984, five works by Camille Corot were stolen from a museum in Semur-en-Auxois. Four were later discovered in Japan, suggesting the thieves had been working for a single customer, but no one was arrested.

In this country, the Metropolitan Police arts and antiques squad is aware that many paintings end up being used as an under-world currency to finance drug deals. Easily stored, canvases rise in value over time and can be changed into any currency.

At the latest estimate, works of art valued at more than £1 billion are missing. They include 349 Picassos, 250 by the Russian artist Marc Chagall, 175 by Dalí, 121 Rembrandts and 112 Renoirs.

Phil Sanders, managing editor of Trace magazine, said: "I don't believe in secret collectors. The thieves who took the paintings from Rome will try and sell them or hold them to ransom. They simply went for the most valuable paintings in the room."

While burglaries in this country are down, the number of cases involving art and collectables is up.

Plunder canvas

Caravaggio: *The Nativity*. Stolen in Italy in 1964. Never reappeared. Priceless.

Vermeer: *The Concert*. Worth more than £20 million. Stolen from Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, Boston, US in 1990.

Rembrandt: *Storm on Sea of Galilee*. Priceless. Stolen in same theft in Boston.

Titian: *Rest on the Flight from Egypt*. £5 million. Taken from Longleat House in 1995.

Turner: *Shade and Darkness and Light and Colour*. Worth £12 million each. Owned by Tate; stolen in 1994 while on loan to Frankfurt gallery.

Gustav Klimt: *Portrait of a Woman*. Stolen from Piacenza in 1997. Worth £5 million.

Jean Baptiste Oudry: *The White Duck*. Taken from Houghton Hall, Norfolk. Worth £5 million.

Kandinsky landscape stolen in France in June 1995. Estimated at £1 million.

Casper David Freidrich: *Nebelochwaden (Mist)*. Theft in Frankfurt in 1984. Worth £7 million.

Francois Boucher: *Le Berger en dormi*. Stolen in France in 1996.

Ruling means cheaper electrical goods

James Melkie and Teresa Hunter

ELECTRICAL goods such as washing machines and televisions could soon be up to £100 cheaper after the Government's decision to outlaw price-fixing from September.

Savings of up to 25 per cent were predicted by the Consumers' Association after Margaret Beckett, the Trade and Industry Secretary, said that restrictive practices had been denying consumers lower prices.

Mrs Beckett felt "tough action" was needed to deal with problems identified last year by the Monopolies and Mergers Commission, which

discovered widespread uniformity in prices. For instance, up to three-quarters of top-name television models were sold at prices within 5 per cent of that recommended by the manufacturers.

The American-owned discount retailer CostCo, which has been at the forefront of the battle to break the cartel, also believes prices should be at least 10 per cent lower.

Suppliers and some big retailers denied there would be any such impact from new rules that will also cover sales of video recorders, camcorders, hi-fi systems, tumble-driers, refrigerators, freezers and dishwashers, a market worth nearly £3.8 billion in 1996.

A Parliamentary Order under the 1973 Fair Trading Act will make it illegal for suppliers to restrict retailers from pricing products as they choose. They will also be required to supply stores that sell at a discount. Retailers will be barred from asking suppliers not to supply, or to apply pressure to, cut-price competitors.

Andrew Fisher, senior policy adviser at the Consumers' Association, said prices could fall by up to 25 per cent, especially for washing machines.

"For the first time ever, there will now be true competition on the high street. Prices will come down... because now shops will have to give shoppers a reason to buy

from them rather than someone down the road."

Jim Murphy, managing director of Costco, said: "In certain cases we have been refused supplies because of our discounts. That means we have to pay a middleman and prices go up."

Dixons and Comet, which dominate the market for electrical goods, argued that the abolition of recommended retail prices would have no impact on big ticket items, claiming competition is already cut-throat.

Manufacturers Sony UK could see "no reason why these new regulations will have any impact on retail prices for consumer electronics products which have

fallen consistently over the past 10 years."

Electrolux said recommended retail prices helped the customer to choose between models and brands. It selected retailers to ensure customers got good advice and service. Panasonic UK also claimed criticisms of price-fixing were unfounded and that recommended prices helped customers negotiate discounts.

The rules will be policed by the Office of Fair Trading, which will issue orders against companies failing to comply. Civil court proceedings would follow continued breaches with unlimited fines and imprisonment of directors the ultimate sanctions.

Blair issues five pledges in Northern Ireland amid signs that Yes vote is strengthening

John Mulholland

TONY Blair flew to Northern Ireland last night for the third time in a fortnight, seeking to reassure Unionist waverers ahead of tomorrow's referendum on the Good Friday Agreement, amid signs that the Yes vote was growing stronger.

Mr Blair issued five pledges on a poster which will be displayed throughout Northern Ireland. He emphasises the primacy of the consent principle and that north-south bodies are accountable to the proposed assembly.

He also pledges fairness and equality for all; the

exclusion of terrorists from government; and that prisoners stay inside unless violence is given up for good.

Unionists opposed to the deal said the pledges failed to address real concerns.

Peter Robinson, deputy leader of the Democratic Unionist Party, said that Mr Blair should stop waving tin-sets and start debating the issues.

Conservative leader William Hague was also in Northern Ireland. On a walkabout in Bangor, Co Down, he said he was satisfied with the assurance Mr Blair had given on the key points — proposals for the early release of paramilitary prisoners and Unionist fears that Sinn Féin presi-

dent Gerry Adams could be part of an executive in charge of a power-sharing administration without IRA weapons behind his back.

A telephone poll published in today's Irish Times puts those supporting the deal at 60 per cent, with 25 per cent voting No and 15 per cent undecided. The indications are that Unionist don't know are shifting towards the Yes camp.

The newspaper's poll last week suggested 56 per cent in favour, 25 per cent against and 19 per cent undecided. Yes campaigners argue that the impact of the Balcombe Street gang's appearance at the Sinn Féin conference 11 days ago is diminishing.

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Supporters insist the case against Parry and McLauchlan is profoundly flawed □ Angry family of the Australian victim demand 'pay up'

Only the two nurses know the truth

PRESS RELEASE

19th May 1998

From the Office of Ambassador Ghazi Alqosaibi

In response to a petition from the families of the two British nurses convicted of murder in Saudi Arabia, the Ambassador of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, King Fahd bin Abdul Aziz, issued an order commencing the sentence of the two nurses to the period they have already spent in jail and ordering their release.

According to the judicial laws of Saudi Arabia, when the next-of-kin is a murder case waives the right to retribution, the Court can impose a discretionary jail sentence which the King can commute. This is what happened in this case.

I expect the two nurses to be back in the United Kingdom in the next couple of days.

Rory Carroll examines claim and counter-claim in the case of the murdered Australian nurse

DID they do it? Despite King Fahd's pardon, the two British nurses, Deborah Parry and Lucille McLauchlan, are still deemed guilty under Saudi law. Supporters insist neither was capable of murder and that the case against them was profoundly flawed.

The opaque system of Sharia law, in which three judges bear evidence behind closed doors, fed rumour and counter-rumour. Saudi leaders aimed at smearing the nurses were countered by newspaper campaigns apparently convinced of their innocence.

Parry and McLauchlan are probably the only people to know whether they killed Yvonne Gilford.

Once on British soil the verdict that matters is that of the public. Presumed innocent, and they join the ranks of the wronged. Presumed guilty, and they become pariahs, like O J Simpson.

THE KILLING On December 11, the day after a staff Christmas party, Miss Gilford's body was found in block 44 of the King Fahd medical centre in Dahrhan. She had been battered, suffocated and stabbed 13 times with her own kitchen knife. Police said Parry did the stabbing and that McLauchlan smothered the victim's cries with a cushion. Frank Gilford, Yvonne's brother, said he was shocked at the precision of the wounds.

Lawyers said there was no trace of blood on the knife and question marks hung over the quality of the post mortem. Despite the fact that Miss Gilford was also smothered over the head with a teapot and had struggled so ferociously that furniture was strewn over her room, no forensic evidence was produced linking the two women to her killing. No trace of blood on their clothes, no fingerprints.

MOTIVE Prosecutors said Parry and 54-year-old Miss Gilford were having a lesbian affair which ended in violent argument.

Lawyers said all three were heterosexual. McLauchlan was engaged. Parry had had two long-term relationships with men, and Miss Gilford had conducted a 20-year affair with a South African businessman. Miss Gilford was friendly with Parry and had a mother-daughter relationship with McLauchlan.

CREDIT CARD The Saudis said Miss Gilford's ATM credit card was used to withdraw 5,000 riyals (£862) — the daily maximum — on three successive days after her death from a cash-point at the Al Shulah trading centre where expatriates shopped. The person using the machine requested English instructions.

Police suspicions fell on Parry and McLauchlan. McLauchlan, who faced a criminal prosecution in Britain over allegations that she used a terminally ill AIDS patient's credit card to steal £1,740, was caught attempting

to withdraw another £862 with Parry.

Rubbish, said their lawyers. The withdrawals were made after their arrest. The prosecution failed to produce the security video they said recorded the withdrawals.

OTHER SUSPECTS The court never summoned a Saudi security guard said to have pestered Miss Gilford, nor the guards said to be angry that her loans to nurses undercut their money-lending racket. Some of those guards are missing, it is claimed. Reports differ over whether Miss Gilford lent money interest-free, or whether she was a loan-shark who hired a Filipino enforcer. McLauchlan denied owing Miss Gilford a lot of money.

CONFESSIONS After five days of questioning, both women made hand-written confessions, based on the premise of a lesbian relationship between Parry and Miss Gilford. They stated McLauchlan was called to Miss Gilford's room to remove Parry, who was refusing to accept their relationship was over. A row flared which ended in Miss Gilford's death. They repeated their confessions in front of three judges.

They later retracted, saying the statements were induced, without a lawyer present, through promises of immediate return home, sleep and food deprivation, assaults and threats of rape.

Michael Fisher, an experienced criminal lawyer who analysed the confessions, said parts did not ring true.



Frank Gilford yesterday after hearing of the nurses' pardon, and above left, how the Saudi ambassador broke the news

The brother: 'I reckon the two must honour the deal'

Christopher Zinn in Sydney

THE family of the murdered nurse Yvonne Gilford was clearly angered last night at the impending release of her convicted killers as their lawyers called for the immediate payment of A\$1.7 million (about £880,000) compensation.

The victim's brother, Frank Gilford, said: "I reckon they should honour their deal. I reckon we have behaved with the utmost civility."

His lawyer, Michael Abbott, threatened legal action if the money, provided after Mr Gilford waived his right to demand the death penalty under Saudi law, was not handed over soon.

"I would not expect to have to go to court for them to do, for once, the right thing," Mr Abbott said. "But if we have

to go to court, we'll go to court."

The money, \$1.7 million of which Mr Gilford has promised to an Adelaide hospital in his sister's memory, is being held in a trust account by an independent law firm in Adelaide.

The lawyer who represents Parry and McLauchlan in Adelaide, Michael Burnett, said he was still awaiting instructions from the nurses' lawyer in Saudi Arabia before handing over the money. He would not comment on reports that the sum would only be paid if Mr Gilford agreed publicly to refer to the payment as blood money, not compensation.

The nurses' Saudi lawyer, Salah al-Hejailan, said: "I have no intention of releasing the money until they accept it was blood money, until they say in public it was blood money."

In October Mr Gilford said he had accepted compensation for the killing but emphasised he did not regard it as blood money.

His reluctance to comment immediately is probably because he has learned the hard way to have all details of the many and often confusing developments in the case verified before speaking out.

Mr Gilford, a courier in the outback town of Jamestown, South Australia, has fought an expensive court battle to have the money released. He says he needs the money to cover legal expenses and costs.

The nurses' Adelaide lawyers argued in the supreme court in November that they wanted to be sure the Saudi courts had accepted Mr Gilford's decision to waive the death penalty before any payment was made.

The lawyer: wily diplomat still fighting his corner

Owen Bowcott

SALAH al-Hejailan, the Saudi lawyer who represented Lucille McLauchlan and Deborah Parry throughout their captivity, bailed their early release yesterday as an example of "justice being served in a perfect way."

His comments in Riyadh sounded more like the musings of a diplomat than a solicitor celebrating legal vindication in the courts. But then Mr Hejailan has to operate within the confines of Saudi Arabia's strict Islamic code. "I am very pleased and grateful for the early release pardon issued by the king," he said. "Justice has been served in a perfect way, in all dimensions. The position of the king is a shining aspect of Islamic justice."

"I feel very good about it and I think justice has been served after one year and a couple of months. I hope the two girls will consider this deal and tragedy to be behind them and will look forward to a new life."

Mr Hejailan made Saudi legal history as the first defence lawyer allowed into court. His clients still had to wear traditional prisoners' uniforms: black robes and chains.

Those close to the family suggest the relationship with Mr Hejailan was at best uneasy and sometimes generated confusion in Britain about who should speak on their behalf. "He's married to a member of the royal family and seemed to be playing political games," a confidant said.

Lawyers are not supposed to play games with clients when they are facing a death

sentence. They are not supposed to be concerned with the interests of a prince. There was a great deal of unease and discomfort."

Perhaps the distance added to the strain of the relationship. Last night, however, Mr Hejailan appeared to be still fighting for his clients' interests.

He refused to release the £750,000 to Frank Gilford, the brother of the murdered nurse, because the Gilford family insisted on calling it "compensation". "Compensation means admission of guilt — while the court said all along it's blood money," Mr Hejailan said.

He was not reneging on the promise of payment — the money is already held in Australia — but said it has not been decided whether all of the payment would be made.



Ian Black on how London and Riyadh discreetly resolved a problem for their relationship

NO SPECIFIC deal was done to secure the release of Deborah Parry and Lucille McLauchlan, but from the start Saudi Arabia and Britain wanted the issue resolved in a way that did not damage their wider relationship.

As Tony Blair and Robin Cook welcomed the pardon yesterday, describing it as a "generous humanitarian act," there were signs of relief all round that the matter had been concluded.

Both sides agreed that the key to a successful outcome was recognition that Saudi justice had to be seen to run its course and that public pressure from Britain for exceptional treatment would be counter-productive.

Hopes for a resolution rose after Mr Blair saw Crown Prince Abdullah during his visit to the kingdom last month, and when the foreign minister, Prince Saud al-Faisal, saw Mr Cook in London a few days later.

"Both recognised early on that this was a very contentious issue," one Middle East consultant said last night. "The British explained that they valued the relationship but that there was nothing they could do about public opinion. It was just one of those things they wanted to get out of the way."

But Foreign Office officials insisted that the case had never been more than a "serious consular issue" and that it was "nonsense" to suggest that the extensive web of strategic and economic ties between London and Riyadh was ever at risk.

Britain worries about the future of the £20 billion al-Yamamah arms deal with a country which still has the largest oil reserves in the world, is a key ally in a volatile region, and where the death of the ailing King Fahd could trigger a destabilising battle for succession.

Britain is the second largest investor in Saudi Arabia, where UK investment totals £2.5 billion. Saudi Arabia is Britain's 10th largest market.

Relations have improved since serious strain over the activities in London of the dissident Mohammed al-Masari, who the Tory government tried and failed to deport.

"No one was ever desperately worried about it except for presentational reasons," one official said. "They weren't worried about it in the way they were about Masari. Both sides wanted it out of the way. It was an embarrassment. The Saudis now have a greater awareness that the reputation of the kingdom is not good in London."



King Fahd, whose pardon of McLauchlan and Parry (above left) is 'a shining aspect of Islamic justice', their lawyer said

don liberal dinner party and media circles. To have something like this happen in that context was particularly unhelpful."

Credit for the nurses' return was being given last night to Andrew Green, the British ambassador in Riyadh, and a veteran Foreign Office Arabist, and to Ghazi Alqosaibi, the Saudi ambassador to Britain, who announced the release on Tuesday night.

"Green has been instrumental in getting to where we are," an FO colleague said. "His clear policy advice to ministers has been excellent, both on the way the case was likely to go through the Saudi legal system and also the close consular attention we were able to pay to the women."

"It was quicker than normal but our relationship is very good and we have sought to do our consular duty by the women and do our best for them. But this wasn't a result of UK pressure."

Dr Alqosaibi said yesterday that King Fahd was already considering the petition for clemency when Mr Blair visited and that the Prime Minister had not appealed but simply "asked for an update."

The Saudi defence minister, Prince Sultan, insisted that the king had opted for clemency because it was part of Islamic law, or sharia, and not because of what he called "pressure from the international media."

The Saudis were disconcerted by the intense cover-

age given the nurses' story, which they considered a routine murder case. Even the diplomats had rocky moments. Faced by British outrage when McLauchlan was sentenced to flogging last September, Dr Alqosaibi said angrily: "We are not going to change our system, our religion and our customs to appease bleeding heart liberals."

Mr Cook, meeting Prince Saud at the United Nations at the time, was outspoken too, warning of "the very serious impact in Britain if the sentence was carried out." Mr Cook's praised his Saudi counterpart's "sympathy," but was told bluntly: "Any form of interference in the legal process could only complicate the issue."

The media: chequebooks are opened

Kamran Ahmed Media Correspondent

AS SOON as the communique came through from the Saudi ambassador one thing was certain in this story surrounded by confusion. Newspapers would open their cheque books and the numbers would start multiplying.

The media were under renewed scrutiny last night after the release of the Saudi nurses brought a frenzy of bidding from publications keen to buy up their story.

Despite strict rules which say that papers should not allow criminals to profit from their offences, it is understood that the Express and the Mirror have been successful in five and six-figure bids for the stories of the two nurses.

The Mirror is thought to have paid £100,000 for ex-

clusive interviews with Lucille McLauchlan, beating off bids from the Sun and the Daily Mail.

The Express is thought to have paid £80,000 for the rights to Deborah Parry's story.

The Press Complaints Commission has already launched an inquiry into the payments after they received a complaint from George Galloway, Labour MP for Glasgow Kelvin.

"These women have been convicted of murder and are extremely lucky to have avoided the normal penalties for murder in Saudi Arabia," he said in a letter to the director of the PCC, Guy Black.

"Surely [the bidding war] runs contrary to the code of practice of which you are the guardians."

Of course, we have been here before. The buying up of the nurses story maintains a long tradition.

Lord Wakeham, the chairman of the PCC, had to issue a warning to the press after a bitter bidding war for the stories of convicted drug smugglers Patricia Cahill and Karyn Smith, pardoned on humanitarian grounds after serving sentences in Thailand.

Both were involved in book and film deals which are thought to have netted them tens of thousands of pounds.

Nick Leeson, the rogue trader who sparked the collapse of Barings Bank, has also signed book and film deals.

It is predicted that McLauchlan and Parry are likely to make up to £100,000 apiece from newspaper, book, television and film contracts. "So much depends on their mental state when they come back and what they feel capable of doing," said Max Clif-

ford, the publicity agent who has been advising the McLauchlan family.

There is one defence to breaking the code drawn up by the PCC to uphold the standards of the press — public interest.

The Mirror and the Express were both arguing last night that because the issue of innocence of the two nurses has yet to be definitively established, they were perfectly within their rights to offer lucrative contracts.

"We have paid her a substantial sum to provide some small compensation for two years spent in primitive, barbaric conditions," said Piers Morgan, editor of the Mirror.

"There is obvious and compelling public interest in this story, and because we believe her to be innocent there is no breach of the Press Complaints Commission code of conduct."

"As to George Galloway's ludicrous statement, I don't think we need to defend our ethical and moral position to a man who spends his lunchtime cosying up to Saddam Hussein and his evenings dining with Colonel Gaddafi."

Rosie Boycott, editor of the Express, said that her paper had stayed "strictly within" the PCC code.

The problem is that although the two nurses have been freed early, their conviction stands and the obvious conclusion, as with the case of Louise Woodward, is that foreign justice is justice that cannot be trusted.

The statement from the Saudi ambassador did not talk of a pardon but said that the sentence was "commuted" on the orders of the king. The nurses are still officially guilty. Neither the British government nor the Saudis have said anything different.

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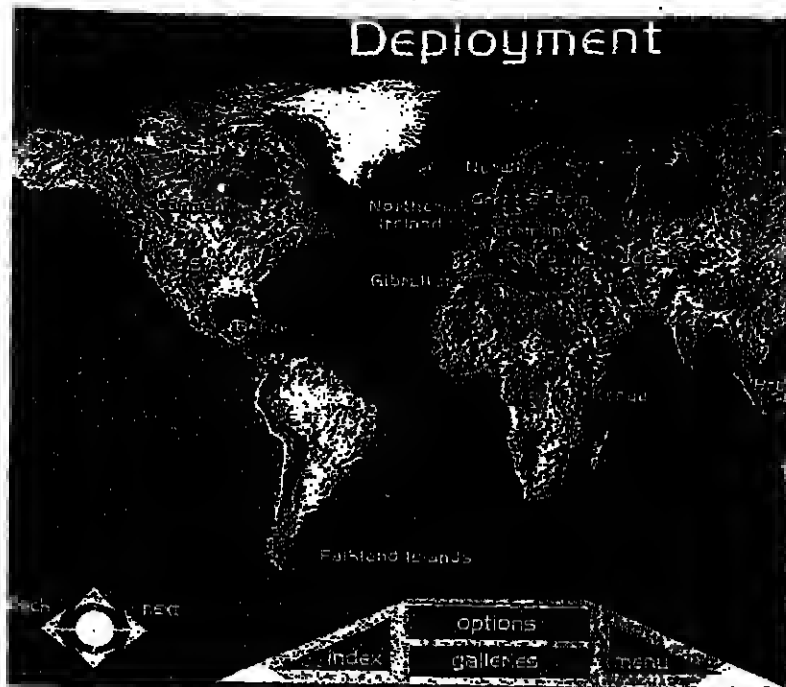
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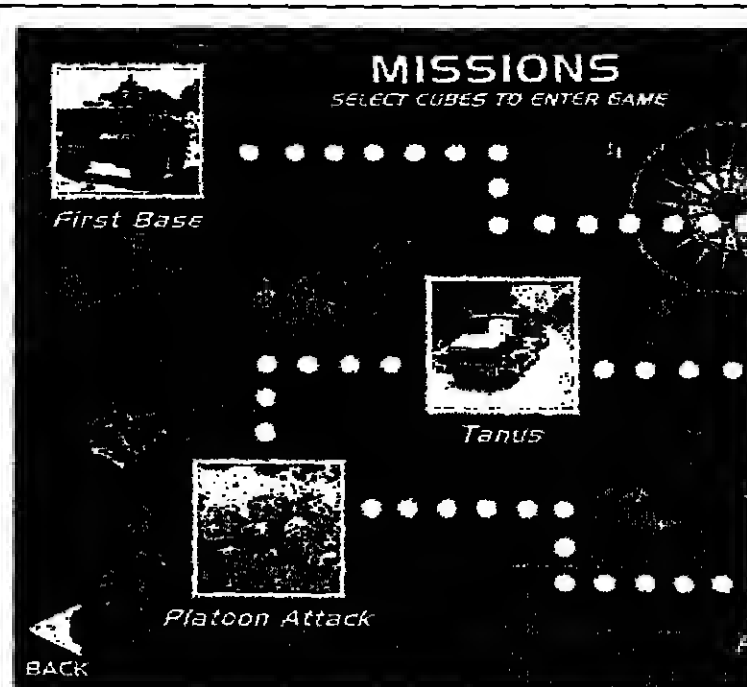
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Deployment



Equipment



MISSIONS

Army attempts to combat its recruitment crisis with a virtual offensive on teenagers reared on diet of computer games

ASSEMBLING an SAS soldier, learning to survive in the jungle and leading an assault on a farmhouse to rescue hostages are not the stuff of the typical educational computer program, writes Stuart Miller.

But today, confronted by dwindling recruitment figures and ignorance of its role, the army will launch the latest offensive in its glossy publicity campaign with First Contact, a hi-tech attempt to appeal to the previously untapped teenage market.

The interactive CD-Rom introduces young players to the rigours of life in a virtual army, from basic training to becoming a general. As well as five survival and attack games, it contains an information section which its designers claim is the "most complete resource on the British army ever assembled".

The Ministry of Defence insists First Contact is primarily educational. "The CD is an opportunity to promote the army to a youthful games-playing public, a section of the community we have not addressed before," said John Reid, the armed forces minister. Senior officers also hope it will tackle the recruitment crisis which this year fell 5,000 short of its new recruits target.

The drought has been brought on by a decline in physical standards in 16 to 25-year-olds. In 1996, a scheme was launched to improve the fitness of potential recruits after almost one in five failed the basic fitness level taken by all applicants before admission to phase one training. Around 27,000 copies of the CD have been produced at a cost of £100,000. Most will be distributed free through libraries, but the army will retain 4,000 to help train existing staff.

It was designed over a 15-month period by the Somerset company Orchard Communications. "Before we started doing any programming or designing we went out with the army on various exercises," said Phil Crane, a director. The information section includes the complete histories of the rifle, the helicopter, the tank and artillery as well as data on equipment in service — all illustrated with video clips and still photographs.

But it is the five games which will provide the biggest attraction, although to negotiate them successfully players will need to have digested much of the data from the information section. Designed to give a flavour of the army, the games begin with basic training in First Base, in which players learn map craft, rank recognition and how to assemble an SAS rifle. After jungle survival training on the second level, players are sent to coordinate the Royal Engineers relief mission of the remote, hurricane-stricken African island of Tanus, before moving on to combat scenarios. They are asked to lead an assault on a farmhouse, then become "virtual generals" with helicopters and tanks to attack an enemy base.



Abbotshury's homosexual swans sharing a meal. The two males have built a nest, keep clear of females, and have carried out an elaborate courtship ritual. PHOTOGRAPH BY RICHARD AUSTIN

When two swans do not make a cygnet

Geoffrey Gibbs
LIKE hundreds of other couples on the lagoon around them, the two magnificent birds went through an elaborate courtship ritual, nodding their heads, making a heart shape with their necks and touching bills.

A nest was built and a wandering female was chased away, but there will be no eggs in that nest. The centuries-old swannery at Abbotshury in Dorset has its first gay couple.

Swanherd Dick Dalley says he has known nothing like it in the 36 years he has managed the 600-strong colony. Others are also perplexed. "It is certainly uncommon and not something I have ever heard of before," said an RSPB spokesman. "It's totally counter-productive to be a homosexual bird."

News in brief

West cousin jailed for sex attacks

A COUSIN of the notorious Cromwell Street multiple murderer Fred West was jailed for four years yesterday for a series of sex attacks on teenage girls. The conviction of William Hill, aged 45, at Birmingham crown court marked the final act in Gloucestershire police's long inquiry into the mass murderer and his family.

British beaches dirtier

BRITISH beaches became dirtier last year, and Blackpool was the worst offender, with seven of its eight beaches listed as unsafe for swimming, the European Commission reported yesterday in its latest annual survey. Blackpool shared the title of Europe's least wholesome beach with the French Riviera resort of St Tropez, where all six beaches were found to have "water of insufficient quality".

Judge admits drink driving

A JUDGE who admitted driving while at more than three times the drink drive limit was disqualified for 30 months yesterday. John Aspinall QC, aged 29, resigned as a recorder for the office in April and could face a Bar Council disciplinary hearing. He was also fined £1,800 by magistrates in Blandford, Dorset, and ordered to pay £70 prosecution costs. The magistrates' chairman, Anthony Jagger, told Aspinall that his ban could be reduced by six months if he completed a driver rehabilitation course by March 20, 2000.

Runaway lorry 'cleared'

THE owners of the runaway lorry that required a big police operation on the M1, said yesterday they had found nothing wrong with the vehicle. Driver Michael Rayner, aged 28, survived a terrifying 20-mile ordeal last week after claiming the accelerator pedal of his Scania lorry had jammed and he could not stop. But the Kent-based company Polkacrest said it had found "no reason for concern with either the truck or ancillary equipment".

Airbus's double fault

A PASSENGER jet made two unscheduled landings at the same airport yesterday after mid-air alerts about an engine. The Monarch Airlines Airbus A320, carrying 156 passengers and seven crew, had just left Manchester bound for Verona, Italy, when the captain noticed oil being lost from the right-hand engine. He diverted to Luton airport to have the fault checked, the airline said. An oil cap was found to be incorrectly fitted and the plane took off, but the oil indicator showed that the right-hand engine was still losing oil, and the captain returned again to Luton. The aircraft was withdrawn and the passengers left later on another.

New life for Parkinson's sufferers

Sarah Hall reports on surgery making possible instant relief from tremors

GRAHAM Sandcock, aged 52, has been gripped by Parkinson's disease for 15 years. Yesterday he was in the midst of a particularly bad tremor — until, when he brushed a tiny magnet past his left collar bone, the involuntary jiggling that had seized his body, ceased. His abrupt transformation was part of a demonstration yesterday in London of the effect of a new form surgery called the magnet past. It is being called the most significant advance in treatment of the debilitating neurological disorder for more than 30 years.

Active Parkinson's Control Therapy can transform "a rigid, drizzling patient into someone who can walk off the operating table," said Steven Gill, a consultant neurosurgeon at Frenchay hospital in Bristol. Mr Gill, who treated Mr Sandcock, believed that as many as 20,000 of the 125,000 Parkinson's sufferers in Britain could have their lives transformed. A neurostimulator, a pacemaker-like device, is implanted on the chest wall and four tiny electrodes are deep in the brain. When the hand-held magnet activates the device, a mild current flows to the electrodes and blocks over-active nerve cells responsible for the rigidity or spasms. Equilibrium is restored to the brain.

Worry over 'outing' of paedophiles

Alan Travis and Kamal Ahmed

LORD Wakeham, chairman of the Press Complaints Commission, has called an inquiry into the naming of paedophiles by local and national newspapers after a complaint from chief probation officers that it is wrecking attempts to keep offenders under official supervision. The decision to tackle one of the most fraught areas of newspaper campaigning came after the commission received a list of 10 incidents in which other people had been attacked or harassed because of their association with paedophiles. In one incident, a 67-year-old man was beaten up and daubed with paint after residents mistook him for a man pictured in the Manchester Evening News.

The commission is concerned that the code controlling the behaviour of the press and protecting people's privacy lacks detail on reporting on released sex offenders. "If we do issue guidelines then they must work. It is a very delicate area but there is real concern," a source said. Local newspapers have defended themselves against charges of whipping up public hysteria. An editorial in the Hartlepool Mail, criticised for outing a former offender, said: "We make no apologies for publishing the names of convicted paedophiles. We would argue that it is grossly unfair to the people living in an area that someone like this should be placed among them in secret."

Man wrongly named on birth certificate wins law change

Clare Dyer
Legal Correspondent

THE law is to be changed to make it easier for a man wrongly registered as the father of a child to have his name removed from the birth certificate. The move follows an 11-year battle by Alan Veale to amend the birth certificate of the boy born to his wife as the result of an affair. Mr Veale, from Blackpool, eventually took his case to the European Commission of Human Rights in Strasbourg, but the Government agreed yesterday to amend the law and pay him £500 compensation to settle the case. The boy, named only as T, was born in April 1987 and his birth was registered with Mr Veale named as the father, though by then divorce proceedings were under way. Mr Veale's wife told him soon after T's birth that he was not the father. She brought paternity proceedings against the other man, swearing that Mr Veale was not T's father, and blood tests excluded him from paternity. Mr Veale, who has since remarried and had a daughter, tried to get the birth certificate amended, but the law allowed such a change only if two people who knew about the true circumstances swore statutory declarations. The boy's mother and real father refused to provide declarations, and the doctor who had performed the blood tests had died. Mr Veale's MP instigated an adjournment debate in Parliament, but was told that neither ministers nor the registrar general could change the birth certificate. The Government has agreed to amend the law to allow one statutory declaration from someone knowing the circumstances, plus a court order stating that the father named is not the biological father. Philip Leach, director of law and policy at the human rights group Liberty, who represented Mr Veale in Strasbourg, said: "The erroneous record has had a continuous, direct and distressing effect on Mr Veale's private life and that of his family. He has fought long and hard just to establish a simple biological truth."

Press hunt

□ **Bournemouth Evening Echo** Launched its own register of paedophiles in 1996, listing names and the areas convicted people lived in. In one story it said a man convicted of child assault was "up to his old tricks". One of his wife and child were burnt out of their house. The probation service was angered when the paper published the child's name.

□ **Manchester Evening News** The paper ran a series of articles "outing" convicted paedophiles. In February 1997 an innocent 67-year-old man was attacked by a vigilante group after the paper published a picture of a paedophile resembling him. In 1996 it published details of a man with a known record of assaults on children. A photograph of a man sitting in his car behind a smashed windscreen was used. The paper said a "vigilante mob had vented their anger".

□ **Worcester Evening News** The paper published details of a child rapist who had been released from jail and housed near the girl he had attacked. The man, described as a "high risk offender" by the probation service, was under police surveillance which had to be dropped after he was harassed and left his flat. The probation service said tracking him was "now causing problems".

□ **Hartlepool Mail** The paper said it had a public duty to notify readers of paedophiles living in their area. One offender it named had to be moved several times after hostile public meetings. The paper had discovered where he was after his son sent it a letter from his father. Eventually the man was moved to a hostel 100 miles away.

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Grisly find for Belgian police

Martin Walker in Brussels

POLICE were yesterday examining five human skulls and seven other fragments of bone found among rubbish in Belgium.

"They are all at least 10 years old, perhaps much older. There are no flesh remains on them and they appear to come from seven different bodies," a harassed police spokesman said yesterday as the media began scenting another Belgian serial killing horror.

A refuse worker found the remains in a bin bag which had been left in an open container on a street in Ranst, outside Antwerp.

The government is still reeling from the brief escape of Marc Dutroux, the suspected killer of four young girls, two weeks ago.

Other recent horrors have included the discovery earlier this year of seven bodies in a priest's home in Brussels. And the so-called Butcher of Mons is still on the loose after killing and dismembering five victims near the French border.



Prime minister Sergei Kiriyenko and President Boris Yeltsin (above) put on a brave face during a Kremlin meeting yesterday. Students and teachers (left) march through Moscow in protest at education budget cuts

Miners' blockade cuts Russia in two

James Meek in Moscow

UNPAID coal miners stepped up their blockade of the Trans-Siberian railway yesterday, cutting the world's largest country in two and forcing the government of the region at the heart of the dispute to declare a state of emergency.

Governor Aman Tuleyev, a popular local leader who treads a delicate path between his communist sympathies and co-operation with the Yeltsin regime, said wagons loaded with explosives and toxic chemicals were among 100 trains trapped by the dispute.

Although the miners' sit-in on the rails is illegal, Mr Tuleyev said force would not be used to remove them. His words were echoed by the prime minister, Sergei Kiriyenko, who said sending in riot police would make the situation worse. "Rumours that the authorities intend to use force against the miners can only be construed as a provocation," he said at a meeting with union representatives in the Kremlin.

Many coal miners have not been paid for half a year. Pits are being shut down, leaving workers and families locked in dead towns — moving to

find work is difficult under strict registration laws.

Working pits cannot or will not pay miners on time, mainly because power stations and foundries cannot or will not pay for coal — part of the chain of debt that hobbles the Russian economy.

The latest protests involve small numbers of miners — hundreds rather than thousands — but are causing greater alarm than previous strikes because of the blockade tactics. More troubling for the Kremlin is that the miners have put their demand for the resignation of President Yeltsin ahead of their demand to be paid.

"We'll only get up off the rails once we've got Yeltsin to go," one group said yesterday.

Past miners' protests have fizzled out but Mr Yeltsin can never forget it was mass demonstrations in the Soviet coalfields which helped to hasten the USSR to its grave.

The Trans-Siberian forges as it passes through the Kuzbass, four time-zones east of Moscow, and miners have now blockaded both branches in several places. With no proper road traversing Russia, this means the main transport artery connecting European Russia, western Siberia and the Urals with the rest of Siberia and the Russian far east has been cut.

East of the blockade lie territories like Krasnoyarsk — new power base of the ambitious ex-general Alexander Lebed — Irkutsk and Vladivostok. The chronic energy shortages and foundries cannot or will not pay for coal — part of the chain of debt that hobbles the Russian economy.

Yesterday Russian marines shot and wounded a man trying to steal fuel from a Pacific Fleet depot.

In the Rostov region of southern Russia, miners blockaded another railway, leading from the north to resorts on the Black Sea. In Vorkuta in the Arctic, another militant miners' stronghold, protesters detained the mayor in his office.

Mr Kiriyenko's two deputies, Boris Nemtsov and Oleg Sysoyev, are due to fly to the Kuzbass and Rostov today to meet miners' leaders. But this is a bad time to be looking for extra money. The Asian crisis has chased foreign investors out of Russia, the cost of borrowing to support the budget deficit has shot up, the collapse in world oil prices has slashed revenue, and the prime minister favours public spending cuts.

The communists mustered enough votes in parliament yesterday to start impeachment proceedings against Mr Yeltsin, but this stands almost no chance of succeeding.

Army elite shows a hard fist



In Jakarta, more students arrive to join the occupation of parliament. Troops have taken a relaxed attitude to the invasion of the rubber-stamp assembly, but in the city of Surabaya yesterday special reserve forces cracked down hard on attempted street protests

John Aglionby in Surabaya sees a hated Suharto unit in action

THE first shot was greeted with incredulity by the crowd of protesters, many of whom had driven up on mopeds and were clutching sweetly scented tropical flowers. But after a volley was fired into the air, fear and panic took hold.

Those in the 2,000-moped convoy who could turn and flee careered down side-roads and the narrow alleys of Indonesia's second largest city, chased by soldiers lashing out with riot canes and wooden clubs.

Others, trapped by the weight of numbers all around them, tried to reason with their attackers. They came under a hail of blows and headed for the alleys. When the troops ran out of humans to hit, they turned their crazed attentions on the riderless mopeds.

These were not regular soldiers. The force bent on crushing anti-government protests yesterday in Surabaya was the strategic reserve, commanded by Mr Suharto's son-in-law, Lieutenant-General Prabowo Subianto.

The sound of breaking

headlights and twisting metal mingled with the gunfire and screams of panic. After some minutes the firing stopped, but people who ventured to the top of the alleys found swarms of soldiers driving onlookers and demonstrators back down the passage ways.

I made it out of the alley where I was hiding but was forced by renewed gunfire to take cover after only about 50 yards behind a corrugated iron fence. This time the shooting was in response to angry onlookers throwing stones at a lorry-load of the hated strategic reserve troops on the other side of the road.

The military driver stopped, turned his vehicle and drove straight across the central reservation, destroying the five-foot fence between the carriageway, and headed straight for the stone throwers.

As we ran, a youth handed me a bullet case. He said: "Take this to Mr Clinton and tell him how our own soldiers are violating our basic rights." But the most common cry from the hundreds of people now lining the streets was a warn-

ing. One person, echoing what many others said, shouted: "We are so angry. Come back tonight mister and you will see this place go up in flames."

At a first-aid post manned by medical students, seven demonstrators, six of them students, were being treated for head, arm and leg injuries. Four others had been taken to hospital. The final count last night was 50 injured, and 15 arrested, but the rage left by the troops lingered in the night air.

It was a medieval joust, but one with lorries fronted in barbed wire

Dr Edi Biantoro, in charge of the little medical centre, was struggling to hold back his tears as he attended the wounded. "This is not like Indonesia," they behaved like animals," he said of the soldiers. "I am so emotional, I don't know what to say. I thought Indonesian people were not like that."

The convoy of 2,000 mopeds was always going to cause trouble — force had already been used against

another student demonstration two hours earlier when protesters were dispersed by troops lashing out with wooden clubs and by unmarked lorries with barbed-wire front grilles.

The confrontation between the moped procession and the strategic reserve came as the protest convoy ground to a halt on a triple overpass near the city's main railway station. An advertisement extolling the virtues of Indonesian industry.

It was like a medieval joust on wheels. Two of the army's lorries, fronted with barbed wire, drove out of the late afternoon sun, towards the mopeds. The lorries contained heavily armed strategic reserve soldiers and a dozen motorcyclists carrying members of the special forces — a force Gen Prabowo also commanded until recently, and one which remains strongly loyal to him.

The troops' commander climbed on to the roof of the car used by the leaders of the protest convoy. He told the thousands of demonstrators to keep calm. He said he was willing to negotiate.

A settlement appeared to be reached, against a backdrop of engines being revved by the increasingly impatient riders. Student

negotiators returned to their vehicles triumphantly punching the air. But before they could set off, the gunfire began.

It came from two more barbed-wire fronted trucks that had made their way through from the back of the convoy. There had been no provocation. But the green-beretted strategic reserve seemed to have no compunction about turning its guns on those protesting against Indonesia's aging autocrats.

This was spelled out very clearly earlier in the day at Surabaya's Teacher Training College. There, more than 3,000 students decided to take their protest calling for President Suharto's immediate resignation on to the streets. When it seemed the police were going to let the march proceed, nine army motorbikes and two lorries full of reserve troops arrived on the scene.

The officer in charge said if the students so much as attempted to force their way through, "we will not hesitate to open fire". The students quickly retreated to their campus.

One of the protest organisers, Anton, said: "It's not that we are not prepared to become victims, but we do not want to die unnecessarily."

Asparagus farmers dig in

Jan Traynor in Bonn

FROM the Bavarian hills to the northern plains, Germany's asparagus farmers are in revolt.

The Whitsun harvest of the "king of vegetables" normally brings an influx of cheap, industrious Poles to do the back-breaking work few Germans would contemplate.

But the combination of forthcoming elections and record unemployment has caused Bonn to bar about 30,000 Poles from German farms while the country's dole offices are forcing the jobless into the fields.

The result is that asparagus tips are rotting and being dug back into the earth, prompting apoplectic farmers to threaten to sue the government for their losses.

"Just to look at some of the fields would bring tears to your eyes," said Wolfgang Böser, head of the association of south German asparagus growers. He reckons his members have lost £1 million, while 15 per cent of this year's bumper crop is going unharvested.

The government, wrestling with 4.4 million jobless, has echoed Norman Tebbit's celebrated injunction to the unemployed to get on their bikes and look for work and decided to curb the work permits for east Europeans who come in the spring and stay until the autumn grape harvest.

The scheme has not been a resounding success. "We've never got the grapes in without our Polish friends to help us," said a north Bavarian vintner. "Last year I took on a local lad who had no work. He

lasted a day or two then never showed up again."

Some 200,000 Poles migrate every spring and summer for the harvest, but this has been cut by up to 15 per cent. The labour ministry in Bonn, contemptuous of the farming lobby's complaints, says wealthy farmers are upset because they have over-expanded. It says farmers are having to use asparagus as manure because of a record crop and falling prices.

Unemployed Germans are earning less than £200 a week to pick asparagus — little more than they can get on the dole.

One farmer said he was promised 50 labourers by the dole office last week. On 23 showed up. By 10am on the first morning there were 10 left and by the afternoon he had no one to pick his vegetable king.

Domestic clash for Netanyahu

Julian Borger in Jerusalem

ISRAEL'S first family is split over the fate of their own chief spin-doctor who was quoted in this week's New Yorker as bemoaning Benjamin Netanyahu's philandering and describing the prime minister's wife, Sara, as mentally unstable.

A government official described Mr Netanyahu as being "out to get" David Bar-Ilan, a former concert pianist who has served as Mr Netanyahu's media adviser since his election in 1996. But Mr Netanyahu is reportedly keen to keep Mr Bar-Ilan, a confidant who has successfully defused a string of public relations crises in the past two years.

"In a way it's an interesting test," said the Israeli official. "If David goes, then we'll know just how powerful Sara is."

The extent of the first lady's influence has been a source of as much press fascination as her idiosyncratic behaviour. Last December, a lengthy newspaper profile of the 39-year-old former flight attendant alleged she had taken over a suite of rooms next to the prime minister's office into a Byzantine backyard, hiring and firing as the fancy took her and deploying state-employed bodyguards to pick up scraps of food dropped by the Netanyahu's young children.

In the New Yorker's Letter to the Editor, the reporter David Remnick quotes Mr Bar-Ilan as saying: "Look, Sara is not the most stable woman in the world," and suggesting that her public appearances had been

restricted to limit the political damage they caused.

On the subject of his boss's self-confessed adultery, Mr Bar-Ilan is reported to complain: "One thing is to have an affair with a *shiksa* [gentile woman] but a married woman!"

The article, a profile of Mr Netanyahu entitled *The Outsider*, also cites the garrulous 68-year-old spokesman as saying Moshe Dayan, Israel's soldier-hero of the 1967 war, "screwed half the women in the army", provoking instant calls from the Dayan family for his dismissal and prosecution.

"This is just to show what kind of journalism we're talking about," said a press office employee.

The video was due to be aired on Israeli television last night, but it seemed likely only to strengthen the theory, widely-held in the Jerusalem press corps, that Mr Bar-Ilan had assumed his conversation with Mr Remnick was an unattributable briefing.

The reporter, a Pulitzer Prize winner, told Israeli radio that he had every reason to believe the interview was on the record. "We sat down in his office, I had my notebook out and was taking notes... There was never any mention of 'off the record'"

Back at his office yesterday for the first time since the affair erupted, Mr Bar-Ilan insisted the quotes had been fabricated.

"They were distorted in such a fashion that they came out meaning the opposite from what was meant."

However he said he would not take action against the US magazine.

The government public relations machine was hitting back in other ways yesterday. In the Jerusalem Post, an English-language daily which Mr Bar-Ilan edited before en-

tering government, a front-page article accused the New Yorker of copying other quotes without attribution.

Last night the prime minister's press office issued a transcript of a videotaped conversation between Mr Netanyahu and Mr Remnick discussing "the rules of the game" for their interview, during which the journalist appears to agree to check the quotes used with the prime minister's office. But there is no mention of an interview with Mr Bar-Ilan.

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Mr Bar-Ilan gave no sign yesterday that he had any plans to leave his job, and officials said that a dismissal could be interpreted as an admission that the New Yorker story is accurate.

Mr Netanyahu has publicly accepted his spokesman's denials, but gave less than a ringing endorsement when questioned on the issue.

American aid fosters regime rivals

Tim Weiner in Washington

THE CLINTON administration has given crucial support to leading Indonesian opposition groups, even as it has tried to shore up President Suharto.

The money comes from the Agency for International Development, better known for building dams and roads than for funding opponents of au-

thoritarian leaders.

The sum, \$16 million since 1995, is small among United States foreign-aid programmes. But it has been vital to the survival of groups that support human rights and free speech.

The money is the largest source of income for groups like the Indonesia Legal Aid Society, which is giving free legal advice to political figures and students arrested in

the current crisis.

AID has supported 30 non-governmental organisations in Indonesia. They include an environmental group fighting a US mining company on behalf of people who live near the company's projects, journalists whose work was banned by the government, a women's rights group and a consumer rights foundation.

Peter Galbraith, a former senior counsel to AID, said:

"The idea was to send a message that the United States was concerned about something other than the banks and the economic issues, that we thought about the ordinary people of Indonesia, and to prepare for a possible transition from Suharto to what we hope will be a more democratic and stable system."

William Little, professor of Indonesia studies at Ohio University and a former AID

consultant, said the programme had been a success.

"A democracy requires a civil society," he said. "Indonesia has been like the Soviet Union. The government controls most civil society organisations. It creates them or determines who their leaders are. The point of the programme was to try to develop these groups. The groups are now leading figures in the opposition."

— *New York Times*.

Flight into devastation and despair

Gary Younge takes a trip to the scorched earth of Sierra Leone's diamond district aboard the helicopter at the centre of the arms affair

JUBA flies low, fast and in three dimensions. It's the best armour plating you can have. That way you don't give the rebels any time to spot you. And if you keep moving up or down and across then it's difficult for them to track you," he says in a thick African accent.

Then he takes out a map and charts the route over rebel territory and through the hills to Koidu, the main city in the diamond-mining district of Kono.

"If you hear something like the tapping of a typewriter then that will be the rebels firing at us. But don't worry," he says.

It is the first time he has flown Bokkie to Koidu in more than six months. Bokkie is the Sandline International-owned helicopter that was at the centre of the controversy over the supply of arms to Sierra Leone.

Bokkie, which was made by Russians and bought by mercenaries in Bulgaria, cuts urgent zig-zags in the air. At times it flies just 5 metres from the ground.

Perched at the open door at the front with a large gun is Fidi Fred, a tall, handsome ex-SAS man from Freetown who helped storm the Iranian embassy in London in 1980.

At the back there is a Nigerian gunner from the West African peacekeeping force, Ecomog. At either end there is a bearded Boer — both former soldiers in the South African army — from the security firm Lifeguards.

In the middle are two British businessmen who work in diamond recovery. They want to see how much damage the rebels have done to their investment.

Arriving at Koidu, the helicopter circles a scene of destruction. When the rebels were chased out by Ecomog a few weeks ago they looted and burned the town, leaving only the mosque intact.

Operation No Living Thing sent Koidu's 5,000 inhabitants fleeing into the bush. If soldiers from the former junta had carpet-bombed the town they could not have been more effective.

Those who could not escape were either killed or abducted by the rebels. Boys were taken to carry their weapons; girls and women to cook and be raped.

"They asked us if we had any food. When I said no, they just took away my 14-year-old daughter and 12-year-old son and left me with one boy," said Sahr Motwa.

From the ground the town looks like a charred shell. Burned-out cars carrying rebel slogans line streets paved with rubble.

"This was not a war, it was just destruction," said Muchtar Sherif, who spent several weeks in the bush after the rebels torched his home.

Many like him are slowly and warily coming back to what is left of the town, bringing with them new tragedy. For, after two months in the bush with only mangos and leaves to eat, they are returning with the distended bellies and matchstick arms and legs of the seriously malnourished.

One 10-year-old boy, who had seen his parents hacked to death by soldiers from the former junta, was too weak to walk but so small and light he was easily carried by an Ecomog soldier. Alongside them were the amputees, rape survivors and victims of countless atrocities, such as Alfred, aged eight, whose back is a mass of puss and scars. The rebels had thrown him on a fire.

All are effectively refugees with no shelter in their home town. But the security situation has prevented any aid agencies from reaching them.

There are no tents. There is no food and no medical help. The doctor who came with Ecomog was reportedly killed in an ambush two weeks ago just outside the town.

While the refugees are safe here, in material terms they feel only marginally better off than when they were in the bush.

"When it rains, it rains on us. When we get sick, we die. It is as though nobody cares what happens. As if we do not deserve humanitarian aid because we are not human beings," says Mr Sherif.

While the town has been liberated and is being used as a fortress by Ecomog, the situation in nearby areas is still precarious.

On Tuesday night the rebels attacked the Ecomog base, waging a gun battle that lasted half an hour. Yesterday, as an Ecomog armed escort led the way to a mine leased by the Canadian-based firm DiamondWorks, there was an exchange of gunfire between rebels in the hills and soldiers nearby.

A major stake in DiamondWorks is held by British businessman Tony Buckingham. He shares office premises with Lieutenant-Colonel Tim Spicer, the founder and head of Sandline, in London's King's Road.

The compound around the mine now looks like a derelict building site.



Mineworkers under guard wash gravel containing diamonds, the focus of Sierra Leone's power struggles

PHOTOGRAPH — MIKE FORSTER

For several months after the junta took over, work at the mine continued. But when it became clear that the days of rebel rule would soon be over and that the 4 million carats of top quality diamonds which are estimated to lie at the bottom of the mine would not be excavated in time to fill junta coffers, rebels wrecked much of the equipment.

Back at the helicopter, Fred and Juba are enjoying their status as local heroes. The two British businessmen are anxious to leave but some of the wounded who need urgent treatment are being loaded on to the plane so they can be seen in Freetown. As soon as they are safely seated on the floor of the helicopter, Bokkie takes off, setting out on a different route to foil the rebels. Flying low, fast and in three dimensions.

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Image make-over for WTO

Larry Elliott in Geneva

THE World Trade Organisation yesterday pledged to rid itself of its secretive and unfriendly public image, as trade ministers from around the globe took the first tentative steps towards a first round of trade liberalisation starting in 18 months' time.

Stung by criticism that it has taken a cavalier approach to the environment and pays scant attention to social problems, the WTO's director-general, Renato Ruggiero, promised a full make-over of the Geneva-based institution.

He said there would be strong emphasis on the environment, social policy, health and development.

Since the weekend, ministers have been holding meetings amid tight security due to daily, violent demonstrations against the WTO on the streets of Geneva.

The declaration issued at the end of the ministers' three-day session stressed the need for greater trade liberalisation and reflected calls from Bill Clinton and Tony Blair for the WTO to present a more human face.

"We remain deeply concerned over the marginalisation of least developed countries and certain small economies, and recognise the urgent need to address this issue which has been compounded by the chronic foreign debt problem facing many of them," it said.

It added: "We recognise the importance of enhancing public understanding of the benefits of the multilateral trading system ... We will consider how to improve the transparency of WTO negotiations."

Charlene Garabed, the United States trade representative, said: "The greatest threat to the global system comes not from the difficulty of negotiation but from a failure of public trust in the system."

But pressure groups are sceptical of the promised revamp. Environmentalists said they wanted to see action rather than words, while development groups pointed out that only one rich country — Britain — had backed zero tariffs for imports from developing countries.

Trade officials will spend the next year preparing for a ministerial conference — tentatively scheduled for a city in the American Mid-West in the final three months of 1999 — to set the ground rules for the liberalisation drive.

The US expressed delight at a declaration from trade ministers opposing tariffs on commerce conducted in cyberspace. But Brussels and Washington differ on how negotiations should proceed, with the European Union favouring a full-scale round of talks, while the US prefers a sector-by-sector approach.

Under the terms of the Uruguay round of talks, the last trade liberalisation negotiation that ended in 1980, the WTO next year will begin discussing fresh cuts in subsidies to the protected European farming sector. Sir Leon Brittan, the EU's external affairs commissioner, is keen to widen the scope of the talks to embrace competition, tariffs, investment and government procurement so there are trade-offs for negotiators.

But President Clinton said this week: "We should explore whether there is a way to tear down barriers without waiting for every issue in every sector to be resolved before any issue in any sector is resolved. We should do this in a way that is fair and balanced."

Sir Leon said: "President Clinton is now halfway to endorsing a round. This is very encouraging. Clearly things are moving in the right direction."

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News in brief

Central American wildfire toll tops 50

CENTRAL America is being ravaged by the most devastating wildfires in 70 years as walls of flame engulf millions of acres of wood and grassland from Nicaragua north through El Salvador, Honduras and Guatemala to Mexico.

The fires have been burning for months but have intensified recently because of drought caused by El Niño. At least 50 people have died in Mexico, most of them while fighting the blazes.

Ancient Mayan ruins in Guatemala are threatened and rare plants and animals have been destroyed in some of Mexico's most fragile ecosystems.

Smoke from the fires has been blamed for an air crash in Guatemala, which killed three men and airports have been closed. It has also pushed smoke into Texas and a gritty haze as far as Oklahoma and Wisconsin.

Mexican authorities are blaming everyone for the fires, from peasant farmers to drug traffickers to motorists throwing cigarette butts. "It's a national disaster," said one of the country's leading environmentalists. — *Washington Post, Mexico City.*

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Threat of June strike in Korea

SOUTH Korea's second-largest labour umbrella group decided yesterday to call a general strike in June to push its demands for the scrapping of laws making layoffs easier, a union spokesman said.

Before then, core members of the 550,000-strong Korean Confederation of Trade Unions — which has a reputation for militancy — will down tools indefinitely from May 27, said the spokesman, Chung Sung-hee.

A day or two before that, the union group would make one more appeal to President Kim Dae-jung to accept its demands, Mr Chung said. "If our demands are not accepted after the May 27 strike, we will call an all-out strike in all industries on June 10."

The union paralysed many of the country's industrial sectors for nearly two months early last year in wild-cat strikes called to protest against new labour laws. — *Reuters, Seoul*

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The union paralysed many of the country's industrial sectors for nearly two months early last year in wild-cat strikes called to protest against new labour laws. — *Reuters, Seoul*

Three held for 'revenge killing'

KENYAN police said yesterday they had arrested the man who ordered the killing on Saturday of the Rwandan opposition leader Seth Sendashonga and the two men who shot him.

A spokesman said a Rwandan Tutsi businessman living in Nairobi had confessed to ordering Sendashonga's murder for personal revenge.

Neither the businessman nor the two other men — described as a Rwandan Hutu and an Ugandan — were identified. Police said the businessman had told them Sendashonga, Rwanda's interior minister from July 1994 to August 1995, and the businessman's father had stolen \$24 million in Rwanda.

The businessman claimed Sendashonga had the father, a one-time director of immigration in Rwanda, killed after refusing to share the money. Sendashonga was a member of the Rwandan Patriotic Front that ousted a Hutu extremist government in Rwanda in 1994 which had orchestrated the genocide of more than half a million people, mostly minority Tutsis.



Bishop Desmond Tutu is granted freedom of the city of Cape Town yesterday

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Hague's euro dilemma

UK may be forced to join

POOR William Hague, damned when he doesn't proclaim distinctive policies and, this week, damned when he does. The routine accusation that the Conservative leader modifies his positions in response to Labour's myriad initiatives can scarcely be levelled at him over Europe. In Fontainebleau on Tuesday night he planted his standard firmly on the high ground of Euroscepticism.

It was a well-argued speech, more substantial than Tony Blair's address to the National Assembly in March (though Mr Blair dared to speak in French), which gave public voice to Mr Hague's deep-seated anti-federalism. Integrationist solutions for Europe's future are old men's answers, corporatist remedies of the 1950s to prevent the wars of the 1940s, the youth of 37 declared. In that respect he still apes the Prime Minister: both have a tendency to lecture their more prosperous neighbours across the Channel.

But was the Hague speech wise, politically? In October 1990 Margaret Thatcher famously declared "No, no, no" when asked in the Commons about British membership of a single European currency. A month later she was forced from office.

Nothing so dramatic will happen to her successor-but-one, who has evidently decided that seven years of fence-sitting over the euro by John Major did nothing to save his government from the worst election defeat since 1906.

Yet Mr Hague's speech had an immediate

and predictably divisive impact on his party. Eurosceptics, widely blamed by local activists for much of last May's humiliation, were thrilled. Michael Heseltine and Kenneth Clarke, still the biggest beasts in the Tory jungle, headed for the TV studios to accuse him of splitting the party, alienating business and of losing the vital centre ground on which elections are won.

It is a useful reminder that Mr Major's fence-sitting ("negotiate and decide" as he put it, "wait and see" to the rest of us) had its uses, which may be why Mr Blair and Gordon Brown have climbed on a remarkably similar looking fence. They hope to stay there until 2002 — if they can.

So far, so predictable. Yet Mr Hague remains on the horns of a dilemma he has fashioned for himself. In Fontainebleau he admitted that the single currency will happen on January 1 and is irreversible. He believes it will rapidly lead to supranational control over taxation and spending, en route to the political union which is the true driving force behind the rush to EMU. That in turn will eventually produce political crisis, neo-fascism Balkan-style or (this week's text) Indonesia's bloodbaths on the streets.

Yet if Mr Hague believes this scenario (he does), then why not set his face against the euro forever instead of for this and the next Parliament. Because, like Mr Blair and Mr Major, he knows that if the single currency proves a success, even in the short term, sterling will be forced by the markets to join it. Not for Mr Hague the Churchillian defiance of the 1940 variety. His fierce rhetoric is thus undercut by his caution.

That does not give his critics the right to dismiss his critique of Europe's ponderous economic and political characteristics, nor the deflationary impact the euro and its "one size fits all" interest-rate policy could

have on jobs in many parts of the union. "In the age of the global economy, only the open, nimble and lightly regulated will thrive," Mr Hague predicts. Oddly enough, Mr Blair says similar things, albeit in French, and also extols free trade. Europe's unemployed may wonder about that. So many eastern Europeans, desperate to get access for their goods before they obtain terms for entry into the rich man's club, Messrs Blair and Hague agree on that too. But are they simply paying lip-service?

End of the affair

Nurses should keep media at bay

THE RELEASE of the two British nurses in Saudi Arabia raises difficult questions which will not be disposed of by a triumphalist return. On the whole, the judicial process of other countries should be respected: this is both right in principle and in order to ensure reciprocity. Are the circumstances of this case so exceptional as to warrant a different approach?

The strict terms of the two nurses' release do not hint at any criticism of Saudi justice. Both the Foreign Office and the government in Riyadh insist that it has been allowed to run its full course. The two women were found guilty, in one case of murder and the other of being an accessory to murder. They have served a length of time. Their sentences have now been commuted — not annulled — by King Fahd as he is entitled to. Yet this is largely sophistry. The king does not make a habit of intervening in such cases: their outcome is more likely to be execution than commutation.

The truth is that the affair was inconvenient to both sides. It aroused a great deal

of negative publicity for Riyadh and it made it awkward for Britain to continue selling huge quantities of arms to the Saudis. They now deny that British diplomacy played any part at all: that is to be expected. In reality the Prime Minister and Robin Cook appear to have finessed the issue quite skilfully, and those on both sides interested in promoting British-Saudi business have also helped. The "blood money" put up to compensate the victim's family — also in accordance with Saudi law — was mostly raised by British firms with major trading interests.

As to the facts of the case, we simply do not know what they are. The two nurses claim that their confessions, which they later retracted, were extorted from them. The process was obscure from beginning to end. It was even unclear when and how they were sentenced. The general principle of respect and reciprocity can hardly apply to a legal system which is flawed in its exercise and barbaric in its outcome. That being so, Lucille McLauchlan and Deborah Parry are fully entitled to the presumption of innocence.

This does not mean that the two nurses should now become national heroines: reports of six-figure newspaper deals to "tell their story" are distasteful. This unhappy affair has been resolved: the two are reunited with their families, and that should be that.

Verbal abuse

The press and paedophiles

WHO will speak up for paedophiles? To their credit, the chief probation officers stepped forward yesterday with an appeal to the Press Complaints Commission for

better guidelines for the provincial press on the coverage of paedophiles who have been released into the community. On many fronts — accuracy, fair presentation, respect for both sides of an argument — Britain's provincial press is way ahead of many national papers. Understandably so. Unlike the tabloids, they live among the people they report. Their credibility relies on honest reporting because their readers are often familiar with the details they report. Sensationalism can be quickly identified. Yet the coverage of released paedophiles by some provincial papers has been as sensational and damaging as the tabloids'.

A recent survey by the chief probation officers documented some of the damage: neighbours knocked up by reporters and informed a paedophile had moved into their road; mistaken identification of quite innocent residents. One innocent man was badly beaten up by a gang when wrongly identified by our own sister paper, the Manchester Evening News. A genuine offender was burnt out of his home by a mob and his child named and identified. The media should not be promoting lynch law. Indeed, by provoking sexual offenders to run for cover, some local papers have been making supervision impossible. That is the chief probation officers' main concern. It is making local communities more, not less, vulnerable. Supervision is working. It is far more effective than forcing paedophiles underground.

Some local papers are being more co-operative. The probation officers pay tribute to the Manchester Evening News under its new editor. But some still want to emulate the tabloids. The Press Complaints Commission is known to be concerned. It should look at the BBC's guidance to its local radio stations.

Letters to the Editor

Murder and modern art

WITH the announcement of a pardon for Lucille McLauchlan and Deborah Parry (Nurses to be freed, May 20), it will be interesting to see which of the newspapers that complained so loudly about payment to Mary Bell, doesn't have its reporter at the airport waving a cheque book. Vic Smith, London.

MIRROR editor Piers Morgan justifies his decision to pay a fortune for the Saudi nurses' story despite their conviction because "most people" believe they are not guilty. He knows that the splash potential of the story relies almost entirely on the fact that most readers believe they are guilty. Dr Nicholas Smith, Oxford.

THE British Tourist Authority reveals an unsuspected streak of Francophilia in its latest campaign. "Les sept jours, ces Anglaises" is a quote from the Asterix books. The Gauls' justification for this sweeping statement was that Les Anglaises drank warm beer and said "je demande votre pardon" a lot. Diana Shepherd, West Drayton, Middx.

IN North Dorset many hamlets in narrow valleys are called Bottom, as in Tarrant Bottom, Coombe Bottom, Well Bottom etc. All things considered, Marnhill (Letters, May 20) is lucky to have got away with Sodom "Lane". Stephen Chambers, London.

IT was interesting to see the abandoned club in Scarborough that the Leeds students thought convincing enough as a photographic backdrop to Paul McCartney's "The Love You Give" art and the Costa del Cation, May 20). The "club" had in fact been recently designed, dressed and named Club Renaissance for another work of fiction, the forthcoming film, Little Voice. Mark Herman, Director, Little Voice, London.

GIVEN that modern art is itself a very profitable confidence trick, the Leeds art students are clearly assured of glittering futures. Dr D E Evans, Cheshire. Hulse, Cheshire.

Windows closes options

IT is farcical to suggest that Microsoft's bundling of its Internet software with its Windows system will free consumers from the "format wars" that dog new technology (Tangles in the Net, G2, May 20). Microsoft's immense profitability is founded on exploiting ever-changing formats, generating new income from customers tied into its operating systems.

The explosive growth of the Internet happened because Internet software is totally "open" — software producers succeed on competition for quality, not compatibility. This openness is what Bill Gates wishes to destroy to regain market dominance. Already his company takes a small profit from 90 per cent of all the letters and documents produced using PC computers worldwide. If Microsoft succeeds, one organisation will have control over the means of communication in a way that has not been seen for over 500 years. It is distressing that the US is the only government trying to curtail its power. Dr John Lloyd, Manchester.

THERE are other issues that go beyond the computer industry. It is highly likely that browsing the Internet could, to some extent, replace broad-

casting. This highly interactive media, which allows for low-quality video and sound, is perfect for some applications — eg looking up, in your own time, news and sports results, watching edited highlights or listening to reports far more usable than 24-hour news services. Just like broadcasting, many of these services are paid for by advertising. Unlike broadcasting in the UK, though, there is virtually no regulation.

One feature of the new Windows 95 system goes even further than this. Microsoft, having full control of the sequence of events when you turn on the machine, will be able to display downloaded ads. It was apparently over this feature that the negotiations with the US authorities broke down last week, so computer suppliers will not be allowed to turn it off. This really does give Microsoft a licence to print money, just like ITV of old. It is vital the Monopolies and Mergers Commission hold their own inquiry into this. Dr John Lloyd, Manchester.

MICROSOFT is seeking to do what any free market operator naturally would: utilise every possible mechanism

to protect a dominant position and work to contain or eliminate any potential threat.

I have seen Bill Gates quoted as saying in defence of Microsoft that "prices in information technology have fallen consistently and that new companies are emerging constantly with new products and innovations to compete with Microsoft".

But is this true when Microsoft dominates? I bought a new PC in September 1995, at which time Windows 95 was being sold by a major dealer for £25. Today I can buy a new PC, with Windows 95, for £199. But the same dealer is selling Windows 95 for £28. And the prices I have seen suggest that Windows 98 (which is really only an incremental advance on Windows 95) will be no less expensive and perhaps more so.

This is not the only example, but I think makes the point. When Microsoft is competing it is the worst of enemies and unquestionably a friend to the wallet of the consumer. But when it is not competing, it is the worst of monopolists. With the 64 billion dollar question being, in the long term, is that in our good? Odey, W Yorks.

That ancient sport: women v men

HAVING played women's sport for most of my life, I realise the prejudice that it comes up against. This is mainly due to ignorance, but also through the lack of finance, support and publicity.

I thought the Guardian aimed to promote equality, so why was only one woman mentioned in the whole week-end sports supplement? How is women's sport supposed to become recognised and treated seriously with the financial backing that it deserves, if the media does not promote it? A recent example is the women's rugby world cup, where England have been successful, yet the media have hardly mentioned it. Ruth Parkinson, Southampton.

RE Libby Brooks's column about how to cope with being female during the

World Cup (Sidelines, May 19), there is only one answer — decamp to Italy. When I lived there, as an avid Inter Milan fan I was never once told "it's a bloke's thing" (as I have here) or overheard in a crowded bar watching a match "all the bloody women should just piss off home" (as I have here). Everyone in Italy loves football, regardless of gender. And if you don't like football? Go to the end of the bar furthest from the telly, get yourself a glass of wine. Could this be a win/win situation? Lucia Ballie, London.

THERE'S a third way, lofty and academic, to take the heat off. "Did you watch the match last night?" "Who was in it?" "England did well last night." "At what?" "Did you see the Cup

Final?" "Which cup was that?" Mark Hiff (a man), Caversham, Berks.

ONE someone explain to me why Glenn Hoddle is threatening to drop Gazza from the England team? If it is really because he is abusing his body, why was it not a problem when he admitted abusing his wife? Julie Bindel, Leeds.

WE are used to footballers' wives being over the moon. Over Mars is, I take it, Arsenal's latest interplanetary venture. Will Keown and co be keeping it tight at the back around Uranus shortly? Robin Soucher, Abertawe, Warks.

We do not publish letters where only an e-mail address is supplied; please include a full postal address. The Country Diary is on page 10.



Second homes tax rural areas

IT is not just in the Lakes District that second home ownership affects the life of rural communities (Villagers demand tax change to tackle 'blight' of second homes, May 19). In the Cotswolds, perhaps even more because we are close to London, second-home ownership increases house prices, depletes the rural population of residential owners and turns this other area of outstanding natural beauty into a chocolate box theme park for the rich. In this village of only 27 houses, 15 are owned by weekenders. This is not unusual.

The countryside is not for pumping out but to be stewarded by people who live and work in it. Sheila Rosenthal, Northleach, Gloucestershire.

AN additional benefit of a small council tax on second homes would be the separation of the countryside lobby into its component parts. The pro-bloodsports elements would no longer be able to claim legitimacy by including rural housing problems in their manifesto. Liz Millward, Hathersage, Derbyshire.

Wind power piece was hot air

ALTHOUGH the byline on your article on wind power does not register my interest, Crispin Aubrey is editor of Wind Directions, the quarterly magazine of the European Wind Energy Association (Power struggle, Weekend Guardian, May 16). It is sad but not surprising that, having interviewed me for an hour, he made no attempt to explain Country Guardian's position but dismissed us with terms like "holly". Our opposition to wind "farms" is based on the following concerns:

- The UK's 720 wind turbines produce about 0.2 per cent of our electricity. Thanks to privatisation and deregulation bringing prices down, electricity consumption has risen by nearly 2.5 per cent annually for the last five years. On this basis, we would have to build 7000+ turbines a year merely to stand still.
- Energy conservation measures could easily cut electricity consumption by a third with no economic or social costs — energy savings would finance the operation.
- Wind is unique among energy sources in being intermittent and unpredictable. Every

kilowatt of capacity has to be duplicated by a conventional power station to avoid power cuts. Wind can therefore never close a nuclear or fossil fuelled power station.

- The best wind speed sites overlap our best landscapes and if the wind industry gets its way these will be covered in wind turbines. Our opposition to wind farms would be to turbines placed very close to the shore and dominating the coastal landscape.
- Robert Woodward, Vice chairman, Country Guardian, Twickenham.

Fur play

WE made a pledge before the election that we would ban fur farming (Stella McCartney joins animals fight with fur farms plea to PM, May 19). The Government remains fully committed to this policy. We are now considering how the ban can be implemented and an announcement will be made soon. Jack Cunningham, Minister of Agriculture.

We were the media's mirror in ministers' beauty contest

YOUR poll suggests that unpopular ministers should be demoted and popular ones rewarded (Troubled Cook crashes in voters' popularity, May 20). I'd hope that promotion or demotion in a government reshuffle will depend on actual rather than perceived competence.

It is very evident that those who fared worst in the poll were those who had the most negative press. For example, Lord Irvine's performance rating is based, not on his work as Lord Chancellor, but on his choice of wallpaper. Similarly Peter Mandelson seems to be in a no-win situation as far as the media is concerned. Gail Seery, South Witham, Lincs.

WAS one of the people interviewed for your poll. The experience demonstrated to me how polls distort the opinions of the respondents. I vote Labour with extreme reluctance, and will do so only if

there is no credible socialist alternative. In your poll, this just becomes another Labour vote and appears as support for the Blair government, rather than opposition.

Again, I believe all workers should have the right to union recognition — but I was only offered the choice between the TUC and CBI positions, neither of which represents my standpoint. We are used to believing that people lie to opinion pollsters; but sometimes it is the poll, not the respondent, which tells the real lie. Ed Horton, Oxford.

SO Robin Cook's poor performance in the recent opinion poll is mostly due to "adverse publicity over his marriage break-up" and nothing to do with the abandonment of an ethical foreign policy by continuing to sell to Suharto and other tyrants the means to torture and kill. Ben Walsh, Dublin.



Voyage of discovery — a revision of black British history

TREVOR Phillips (Fantastic voyage, Media, May 18) displays a narrow knowledge of the history of Atlantic slavery. African-Americans are not different from other blacks in that part of the western hemisphere. The slave ships that brought them dropped them off wherever they chose. It was not the case that Negroes were sent to the Americas and Ghanians to the Caribbean. It is a fabrication that we in the Caribbean shared the same schools and neighbourhoods as whites. We, like African-Americans, lived in segregated areas. White people visited our neighbourhoods

only when absolutely necessary. For instance, in Kingston, Jamaica, the whites lived in St Andrew where no blacks were even allowed to visit, except of course servants. We as blacks do not see Lenny Henry, Trevor McDonald, Ian Wright and Sir Herman Ouseley as instrumental in putting black people in the public eye. The ones who have done so are those people who have struggled in the ghettos of Brixton, Handsworth, Bristol and other areas against police brutality, unjust courts, and racist attacks. Lance Dunkley, Wolverhampton.

HUNDREDS of thousands of Caribbean men did not come to Britain to enlist in the armed forces in the second world war. Over 1,000 men were recruited to work in timber and munitions in Britain; a few served as light crew in the RAF; at the end of the war some 4,000 more were brought to Britain as RAF ground crew. About 50 women were eventually recruited for the ATS (Auxiliary Territorial Service) and hundreds of men served in the British merchant marine. The Royal Navy retained its pre-war colour bar throughout the war. There were also a few Caribbean in

the Royal Engineers and an equally small number of OJs (other ranks) in the British Army. The total number who served abroad was less than 10,000. However, many thousands of Caribbean men contributed to the war effort by working in munitions and other war industries in the US and by building the US bases in the Caribbean. Others, learning of the colour bar in the British military, which was lifted reluctantly, went to Canada where they were accepted by the armed forces. Marika Sherwood, Institute of Commonwealth Studies, London.

Bertram Schofield

A catalogue of triumphs

EARNING makes some men formidable and others approachable. Bertram Schofield, who has died aged 101, was in the second category. This affability did not, however, prevent him from being an excellent administrator and diplomat.

The period of his keepership of the British Museum's department of manuscripts, between 1956 and 1961, was a difficult one. During the war, the department had continued to add to its collections, but no cataloguing had been done, so that the *Catalogue of Additions*, one of the department's principal responsibilities, was badly in arrears. Schofield worked successfully with the director's office to allow an increase in establishment.

Schofield also recognised that the post-war extension of the keeper's duties made his sole editorship of the *Catalogue of Additions* impossible.

He devoted the work on his senior deputy T.C. Skeat. Thus the 1926-1930 volume appeared in 1963, and the massive 1931-1935 volume was underway when Skeat succeeded Schofield as keeper in 1961, although it was not published until 1967.

Bertram Schofield was born in Southport, one of the six children of George and Mary Schofield. His father was an amateur cycling champion. Bertram was educated at University School, Southport, and Liverpool University, where he read history. Later, he studied at the Sorbonne and Emmanuel College, Cambridge, as an open research student.

His time at Paris made him a fluent French speaker, an accomplishment of which he was very proud, and familiarised him with the *École de Chartes*. There he developed a flair for deciphering and cataloguing medieval charters which less gifted colleagues were disposed to envy. He



His discovery of details of the composition of sand on a French beach in a journal of prehistoric archaeology played a key role in the D-Day landings

was subsequently a vice-president of the British Records Association.

During the first world war, he served in a cycle battalion of the Royal Wiltshire Yeomanry. He was to have taken part in the 1918 expedition to Archangel to aid the White Russians, but was providentially sent on a course and his regiment sailed without him.

Schofield joined the British Museum as an assistant keeper of manuscripts in 1922. In 1928 he married Edith Thomas, with whom he had a son and two daughters. During the second world war he was seconded to the Ministry of Economic Warfare from 1940-1942, and then to special duties with Inter-Services Intelligence and Combined Op-

erations, where he remained until 1944.

It was during this secondment that he made a discovery which had an important effect on the planning for the D-Day landings. A French academic journal of prehistoric archaeology revealed the composition of sand near the beach at Luc-sur-Mer, near Caen, in which armoured fighting vehicles would have become bogged down, and which therefore had to be covered by carpets of matting, laid by specialised tanks called "bebbies".

Returning to the museum after the war, Schofield was promoted to deputy keeper in 1947 and keeper of manuscripts in 1956. In 1959 he was appointed CBE. On his retirement in 1961 he moved to Kidlington, near Oxford. He was able to add to his publications, including the delightful letters of Sir Thomas Knollys to his wife in the first half

of the 17th century, edited for the Norfolk Records Society in 1949, were disappointed by his own illness and that of his wife, who died in 1981.

Among Schofield's pleasures were gardening and music, and he was a contributor to various music journals. Despite his friendliness and accessibility, there was a certain reserve about him.

His devotion to the British Museum was unreserved, and he deeply regretted the transfer of the department of manuscripts to the British Library, believing, as did many of his colleagues, that it had more affinity with the antiquities collections than with that of printed books.

He is survived by his son, two daughters, eight grandchildren, four great-grandchildren, and by two sisters.

Gerald Bonner

Bertram Schofield, keeper of manuscripts, born June 13, 1896; died May 15, 1998

Gordon Benningfield

The artist as champion of the countryside

GORDON Benningfield, who has died aged 81, was probably the most gifted countryside artist of his generation. An outstanding water-colour painter, he was also president of Butterfly Conservation, and vice-chairman of the Countryside Restoration Trust.

He hated bureaucracy and what he saw as environmental illiteracy; consequently an assortment of politicians, councillors, planners, farmers and Environment Agency engineers were his targets. He was alarmed at the industrialisation of agriculture and blamed the damage being done to farmland and wildlife on the Common Agricultural Policy.

Gordon Benningfield was the son of a lighterman, born near the Pool of London. The family moved to Hertfordshire in 1911, but Gordon maintained an emotional attachment to London and was honoured to receive the freedom of the City in 1983.

At London Coney he attended the village school and the local secondary modern. He loved his late-starting country childhood and was enthralled by the wildlife. Being dyslexic, at that time, he found academic work difficult, but his teachers recognised his artistic gifts.

He left school at 15. Offered an apprenticeship in ecclesiastical art with Faithcraft at St Albans, he worked on stained-glass windows, gold

leaf and glass engraving. On moving to the company's London studio he walked past a Jaguar car every morning, and vowed to buy his own one day. In recent years he owned a cosseted Jaguar, as well as two pre-war MGs — and as an environmentalist he admitted the double standard.

At weekends he still roamed his beloved Hertfordshire countryside sketching and painting and he also attended the St Albans School of Art. After 13 years he had accumulated so many private commissions for his watercolours that he left work to concentrate on painting.

As his reputation grew he was commissioned to produce engraved glass windows for the Household Cavalry in the Guards Chapel. In the late 1970s and early 1980s he worked on the television series *In Deepest Britain*, *In the Country*, and in *Dorset Dream* he explored his fascination with Hardy Country.

He believed that the wildlife and landscapes of Hardy should co-exist with modern farming, and was depressed by the ravages caused by those farmers who turned their farms into factories.

In 1978 he published his first book, *Benningfield's Butterflies*; two years later came *Benningfield's Countryside*, which sold more than 150,000 copies and was translated into five languages. Not bad for a dyslexic country boy

who the army turned down for National Service. "I would have loved to have gone in the army," he said, "but they thought I was too thick."

In 1981 the Post Office commissioned him to design a set of butterfly stamps which was followed in 1985 by a set of insects. More books followed: *Hardy Country* (1988) and *Hardy Landscapes* (1990) showed both his knowledge of Hardy and his love of Dorset. *Benningfield's English Farm* (1986) and *Benningfield's English Villages* (1996) demonstrated his concern for the wider countryside.

He did not hunt but he regarded the attack on hunting as an attack on his culture and his friends. He stopped shooting, and his beloved River Gade dried up through over-abstracted so he could not fish. He was deeply upset that he was too ill to go on last March's Countryside March.

He believed that the countryside was in crisis through CAP, the erosion of the Green Belt, and the closure of village schools and shops.

In 1994 This England Award gave him its Silver Cross of St George for his work for the countryside and in 1997 the British Naturalists Association presented him with the Peter Scott Memorial Award. He leaves behind his childhood sweetheart, Betty Boyce, who he married in 1969, two daughters and a border terrier called Ted.

Robin Page

Gordon Benningfield, landscape artist, born October 31, 1936; died May 4, 1998



Gordon Benningfield... published a series of books about the countryside he loved

Cecil Grayson

THE critical editions of Italian authors prepared for Italian publishers by Cecil Grayson, who has died aged 78, were influential in establishing the reputation of British scholarship in Italy in recent decades.

He was educated at Batley Grammar School and St Edmund Hall, Oxford, but after two years joined the army, and served in India. Back at Oxford, he profited from the teaching of Carlo Dionisotti, one of the greatest Italianists of our time, and, after graduation, collaborated with him on *Early Italian Texts* (1949). Dionisotti left Oxford in that year, and Grayson soon showed that he too was a master of textual criticism.

His field of research was Alberti and he set about put-

ting together reliable texts of that author's voluminous writings. A volume of *Opuscoli inedita* appeared in 1954. Then the discovery of unpublished chapters of literary theory by Vincenzo Calzetta interrupted this work. Grayson edited these, along with other works by Calzetta, in 1958. The three splendid volumes of Alberti's *Opera* (1960, 1964, 1973), together with later studies established Grayson as the foremost Alberti scholar of his generation. He also published essays ranging from Dante to the 16th century and translated Roberto Ridolfi's biographies of Savonarola, Machiavelli and Guicciardini.

Appointed University Lecturer in Italian at Oxford in 1948, in 1989 Grayson became Serena Professor of Italian

Studies and Fellow of Magdalen College, a chair which he occupied until 1987. He was also a visiting professor in American and Australian universities and for more than 25 years was an editor of Italian Studies. As a fellow editor, I more than once saw him save some young author from embarrassment by correcting a quotation or a date.

In 1947 Cecil married Margaret, and they had four children. A host of scholars from all over the world will remember with pleasure a visit to their home sometime during the last 50 years.

T Gwynfor Griffiths

Cecil Grayson, Italianist, born February 5, 1920; died April 28, 1998

Birthdays

Michael Crick, television journalist, 40; Malcolm Fraser, former Australian prime minister, 68; David Hunt, former Conservative minister, 56; Will Hutton, editor, the Observer, 48; Paul Keetch, Lib Dem MP, 37; Terry Lightfoot, jazz clarinetist, band leader, 63; Denis MacShane, Labour MP, 50; Leonard Masek, architect, 82; Derek Nandy, founder-director, Rannymede Trust, 82; Andrew Neil, editor-in-chief, the Scotsman, 49; Rosalind Flower, soprano, 49; Mary Robinson, UN high commissioner for human rights, 54; Baron Guy de Rothschild, banker, 88; Robert Welch, designer and silversmith, 69; Desmond Wilcox, broadcaster, 67; James Woodhouse, director, ISIS East, 66.

CORRECTIONS AND CLARIFICATIONS

SELLERS IMAGO, the company contracted to provide the transcription service to both the North Wales Child Abuse Inquiry and the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry, were referred to but not named in a column on the Comment page, Page 16, May 19, have asked us to point out that precisely the same scale of charges for transcripts has applied in each case.

THE RECIPE for chocolate soufflé with Mars bar, Page 61, Guardian Weekend, May 16, specified "75 tsp granulated sugar". It should have called for 85g. Apologies to anyone already seriously oversweetened.

DR BRONOWSKI became Brunowski in Dish of the day, Page 30, G2, May 19.

IN A television review, Page 19, yesterday, we said, "It was Bishop Ussher who dated the Creation to 404 BC. Alpha to omega in less than 2,500 years." In fact it took a little longer. The year given for the Creation by Archbishop Ussher, or Ussher, of Armagh, was 4004BC.

ON PAGE 19, G2, May 19, in an article headed, A world of privilege apart, Oxford's Hebdomadal Council became Oxford's Hebdomadal Council. Hebdomadal Council: the representative board of Oxford University, which meets weekly (*The Shorter Oxford English Dictionary*). Hebdomadal, meeting weekly.

TWO RECENT homophones: 1 "The struggle for indepen-

dence by Cyprus was particularly bitter in the 1960s, with the leaders of the movement for union with Greece fomenting [fomenting] violence and death." Analysis, Page 15, May 19. 2 "Likewise, the kitchen looks like a bomb-sight [bomb-sight], every surface covered etc" Guardian Weekend, Page 70, May 16. Bomber aircraft had bomb-sights.

It is the policy of the Guardian to correct errors as soon as possible. Readers may contact the office of the Readers' Editor, Ian Mayes, by telephoning 0171 239 9589 between 11am and 5pm, Monday to Friday. Surface mail to Readers' Editor, The Guardian, 115, Farringdon Road, London EC1R 3ER. Fax: 0171 239 9597. E-mail: reader@guardian.co.uk

A Country Diary

ACHYVANERAN: As I walked through the paddock looking at the geese and ducks I noticed a great big fly out from one of this year's new nest boxes. The temptation was too much and I lifted the lid to find no eggs but a completed nest, with a fine lining of brownish red hair. For a moment I could not think of the source, then I realised that the hair was from Trivia, smaller of the two African pygmy geese, who was moulting into her summer coat. As far as I can remember it is the first time I have seen goat hair as a nest lining. It reminded me that the St Kildans thought that ropes made of horse hair used for clambering down sea cliffs after eggs and birds were only matched by ropes made of goat hair. Meanwhile the house spar-

Dervish Duma

At the court of King Zog

"PERHAPS the brightest of the young Albanians here..." ran a wartime Foreign Office memorandum, "a bit of a radical, but basically quite sound". The testimonial was unsolicited. Duma, the head of the Albanian Legation in London in 1939, stranded in Britain when Mussolini's troops deposed the democratic government in Tirana on Good Friday of that year.

Duma, who has died aged 89, was one of a handful of liberally educated Albanians who might have been expected to play a prominent part in the governance of his country had democracy been restored. As it was Enver Hoxha's hard-line communist dictatorship condemned Albania to half a century of stagnation and isolation, and denied Duma a role in the creation of a modern Albanian state.

It might not have been so. In 1949 the British and Americans sent a contingent of specially trained experts to Albania to organise opposition to the Hoxha regime (and thus to destabilise the whole Soviet bloc). The plan, approved by Ernest Bevin and Dean Acheson, ended in disaster. Many of the Albanians were shot as they parachuted in; others were arrested and killed. The agent co-ordinating plans between the British and Americans had betrayed the details. His name was Kim Philby.

Dervish Duma was born in the village of Borsh to a Tusk land-owning family. Two tragedies marked his childhood: in 1913 Borsh was attacked and razed by Greek troops — five centuries of Turkish rule had ended a few months earlier; and by the age of 10 both his parents had died. In 1920 Dervish was selected to be one of the first year's intake in the new American Technical College in Tirana and then joined the Royal Albanian Gendarmerie as general secretary, where his abilities so impressed the British CO that arrangements were made for him to study public administration at the London School of Economics. On his return to Albania he entered the diplomatic service at the League of Nations in Geneva and then in London as second secretary to the Albanian Legation: early in 1939 he was promoted to chargé d'affaires.

When Italy invaded Albania and a fascist government was installed, Duma saw that he could be of more use to the Albanian people as a free agent in London and ignored orders to return to Tirana. In 1940 the Foreign Office sponsored an Albanian service of the BBC, with Duma as its presenter. His nightly broad-

casts made him the voice of hope and independence for his occupied countrymen. He also continued to help sort out the problems, large and small, of Albanians in this country. These included the deposed king Zog, his wife and son and five unmarried sisters. They had escaped to Greece on the day after the fascist invasion, arrived in London via Egypt in 1941 and were living in some comfort in the Ritz Hotel.

Duma often told the story of Zog offering a 500 note (worth a four-figure sum today) to a startled tobacconist in Bond Street to pay for a packet of cigarettes. Luckily Duma was with him and was able to dig in his pockets.

Duma had taken a job with the Bowater Paper Corporation with which he had a long and successful career, travelling widely in North America and keeping in touch with Albanian communities. His letters such as the "great Albanian patriot" Falk Konitza,

Duma... war broadcasts

and the former prime minister and translator of Shakespeare, Archbishop Fan Noli. Duma also maintained a friendship with Edith Durham, until her death in 1944, a most voracious champion of Albanian independence. With Aubrey Herbert she had founded the Anglo-Albanian Association in 1912. Duma was chairman at its death: he had served on its committee for 62 years.

The fall of the communist regime in 1991 brought Duma a new lease of life. The Speaker of the Albanian parliament, Pjetër Arbori and Ibrahim Rugova, the moderate Kosovar leader, visited him in Surrey to seek his advice. The BBC's Albanian service was resumed in 1993 and Duma invited to give the first broadcast. He was proud to see his son Alexander appointed honorary consul on the restoration of diplomatic relations with Albania in 1992.

Christopher Knight

Dervish Duma, diplomat and Albanian community leader, born July 4, 1908; died May 6, 1998

Letters

Andrew Roth writes: In connection with the death of Sir Patrick Wall (obituary May 20), it is ironic to note how 92 Cheyne Walk has changed colours as it has changed millions. It is now "pink," owned by Labour MP Barbara Follett and her millionaire novel-writing husband Ken.

It was deepest blue under Sir Patrick, whose family wealth came from Egypt. The house previously gave its name to the "92 Group," since it was long the secret meeting place of hard-right Conservatives, who could only join if authorised by existing members. In my last telephone conversation with Sir Patrick, he was the uncle by marriage of my partner, Antoinette Putnam — he assured me the full decade before the press cottoned on to this "party within a party." There is another link between Sir Patrick and Barbara Follett: South Africa. Barbara Follett was a fellow-traveller in apartheid South Africa, where her first husband was a police officer, a former Marine intelligence officer who was obsessed by the belief

that the Soviets were planning to capture South Africa, using the Cubans to set up satellite regimes in places like Mozambique and finally using the communist component of the ANC to seize power in South Africa.

Alan Knowles writes: Both Keith Bowers and Joan Bakewell caught the flavour of Helen Jenkins (obituary April 11). She did indeed rise to a position of senior producer on some of the BBC's best known current affairs programmes, but no mention was made of where she began her career after leaving university.

Journalists in the Manchester newsmag of the BBC will remember Helen as one of the best and most dogged researchers to work on the main newsdesk. She was, as Bowers mentioned, always on the side of the underdog. Helen will smile at his story of the hapless BBC functionary who had the temerity to ask if she had any controversial views. She would always ask the awkward question. My enduring memory of her of her attendance at NUJ chapel meetings, where I was the Father. She would always ask the question you hoped would be missed. By Helen, it never was.

Death Notices

DEAN, Professor G. W. of Surgery, Lanchester, on Friday, May 20, 1998, at the age of 89, following a stroke. Funeral: Friday, May 22, 2.30pm, St. Peter's Church, Salford. Donations: 01274 401444.

TANNER, Henry, former New York Times correspondent, in New York on May 19, 1998. Funeral: Saturday, May 23, 11am, at the funeral home of Catherine A. Tanner, 17th St. Funeral Home, New York, NY 10011. Tel: 212-262-2622.

Memorial Services

HARBOTTLE, George, MC, Cols de Guerre. A memorial service in celebration of the life of George Harbottle, who died on May 19, 1998, will be held at St. Nicholas Parish Church, Salford, on Friday, May 22, 1998, at 3pm on Friday, May 22, 1998.

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Analysis Gay rights

Leaping out of the ghetto

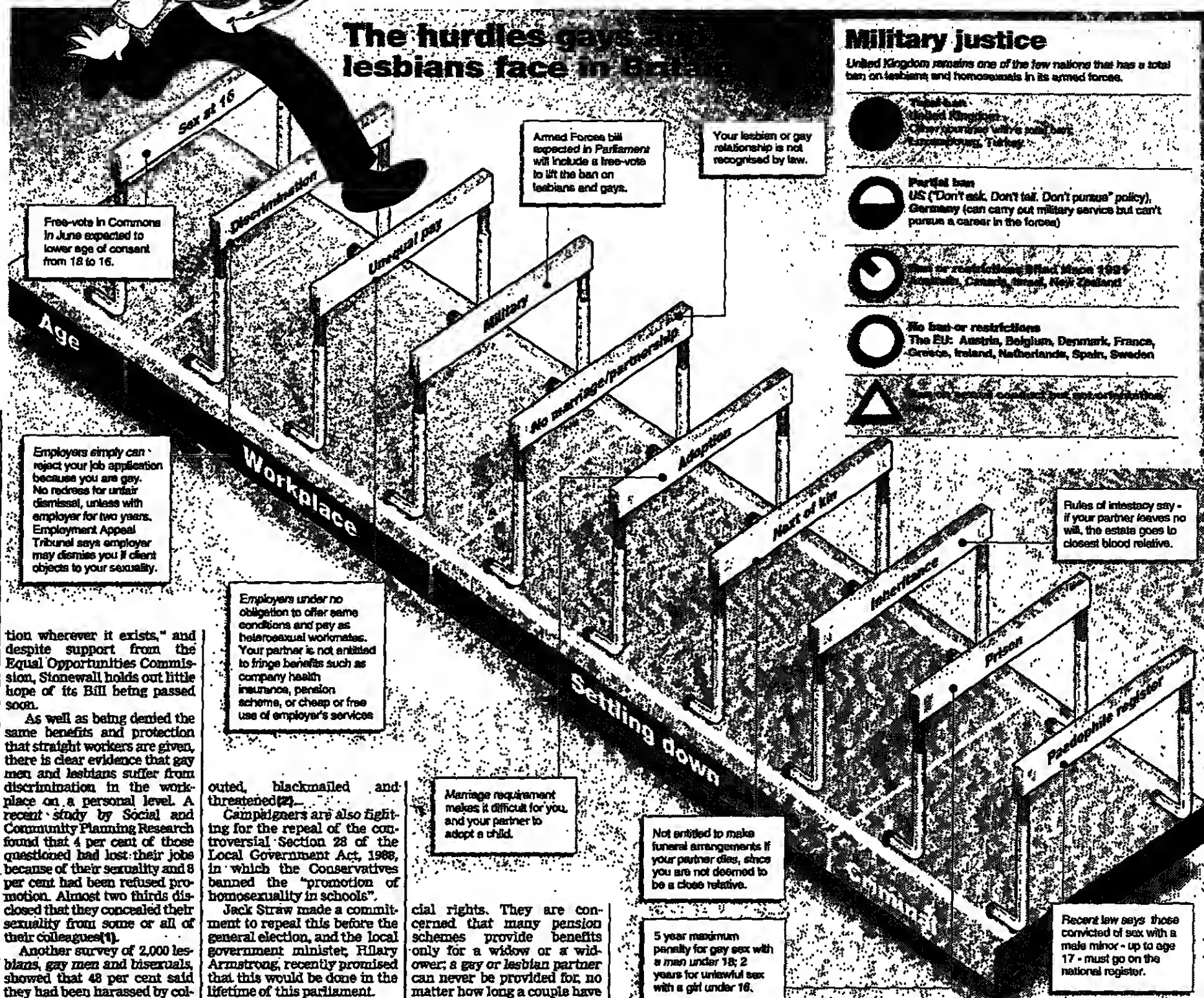
MPs will vote next month to lower the homosexual age of consent to 16. Yet the movement for equality fights on. What's bugging them? More than enough, says **Amelia Gentleman**

WITH the certainty of an historic victory when MPs vote next month to lower the age of consent for gay sex to 16, it might seem that activists have plenty to celebrate — an end to their long agenda perhaps in sight. After all, even the appalling shadow of Aids has receded with the apparent success of the combination drug therapy, and both the political and cultural climate seem recently to have shifted dramatically in activists' favour. The Government has both a lesbian and a gay minister on its front bench, while last summer the biggest yet Gay Pride march took place in London.

But far from relaxing, campaigners are still battling to counter a range of double standards, deeply rooted within the culture, the workplace, and the legal system. Activists assert that a victory on the age of consent will be just another step down the long road to equality — with many hurdles still to be swept aside. Gay rights movements are now working to extend their campaigns to other parts of the law, to schools and to the workplace, and cite numerous areas in which lesbians and gays still face institutionalised discrimination.

are charged with "gross indecency between males" — a gay only crime which carries up to two years in prison. Group sex in private is not an offence for heterosexuals, but it is for gays if there are more than two participants. Earlier this year seven men in Bolton were convicted of gross indecency for having group sex in private. They escaped a prison sentence after Amnesty International said it would adopt them as prisoners of conscience if they went to jail.

Discrimination in the workplace on the grounds of sexual orientation is another key area where action is needed. Lesbians and gay men have almost no protection — so that deciding not to appoint someone because of his or her sexuality is not unlawful. Nor is it against the law to treat gays less favourably, harass them, pay them less, or sack them on the grounds of their sexuality. Anya Palmer of Stonewall explains: "Employers need to be persuaded that they must treat lesbians and gay men exactly as they treat anyone else. It would be quite unacceptable if a future employer asked what race your partner was; they need to realise that it is equally irrelevant to ask what sex they are."



Section 28

Section 28 of the Local Government Act 1988, which bans teachers from 'promoting the teaching of homosexuality in schools', is a major hurdle. Peter Tatchell of OutRage! explains: "Section 28 must be replaced by legislation requiring all schools to provide honest, non-judgmental information about homosexuality. We decided to leaflet the school because of the massive censorship of gay issues within the curriculum — homosexuality isn't mentioned in most sex education classes."

outed, blackmailed and threatened. Campaigners are also fighting for the repeal of the controversial Section 28 of the Local Government Act, 1988, in which the Conservatives banned the "promotion of homosexuality in schools". Jack Straw made a commitment to repeal this before the general election, and the local government minister, Hilary Armstrong, recently promised that this would be done in the lifetime of this parliament.

This is a cause which the more militant gay rights group OutRage! has adopted passionately. Yesterday its members were handing out "It's OK to be Gay" leaflets to school children as they walked into the London Oratory where Tony Blair's son is a pupil. Peter Tatchell of OutRage! explains: "Section 28 must be replaced by legislation requiring all schools to provide honest, non-judgmental information about homosexuality. We decided to leaflet the school because of the massive censorship of gay issues within the curriculum — homosexuality isn't mentioned in most sex education classes."

They are up in arms, too, because married and unmarried heterosexual couples have the right to succeed to a council tenancy while lesbian and gay couples have not. Stonewall hopes to secure equal rights for lesbian and gay parents — but concedes there is a long way to go before this becomes socially acceptable.

And there's anger at the continued ban on gays and lesbians in the armed forces. Reports earlier this week that the ban was likely to be lifted within two years and that the Armed Forces minister was to allow MPs a free vote on the subject have surprised Ministry of Defence officials, who say that there is automatically a vote on the issue during the lifetime of every parliament.

aspirations are echoed by OutRage! but Tatchell's organisation has very different ideas about how to take gay activism forward in the wake of the expected victory on the age of consent.

He explains: "The reality is that many people in the lesbian and gay community are concerned by the conformist politics of other gay rights movements. Equality is important but is not enough in itself. We hope to change the system, not conform."

"We need to step up the pressure. Since 1967, when male homosexuality was partly decriminalised, there has been no major lesbian and gay law reform in Britain. All we've been given is a handful of half-baked reforms. Winning an equal age of consent will be an important advance but it will still leave many homophobic laws unchanged. We won't settle for anything less than total equality. Politicians must not be able to limit the debate to the age of consent."

After MPs vote next month to reduce the age to 16, OutRage! says the next hurdle will be to get it down to 14 for straight and gay teenagers. Tatchell concedes that there are difficulties ahead: "There are still large reservoirs of homophobia. Britain is more homophobic and has more anti-gay laws than any other country in Europe."

Giving weight to Tatchell's fears, Colin Hart, director of the Christian Institute, maintains that there is very little public support for most remaining items on the gay agenda. "While there is clearly a lot of support for the lowering of the age of consent, I think the majority of the public will be very much against the majority of the reforms. I don't think that people hate homosexual people; I just think they disagree with them, disapprove of them and are very worried by these proposals."

Sources: (1) Social and Community Planning Research study: Discrimination Against Gay Men And Lesbians; (2) Stonewall report: Less Equal than Others. Graphic sources: Stonewall, Graphique Finbar Sheehy, Paddy Allen, Resuscitate Matt Keating, Amelia Gentleman is a Guardian reporter.

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FinanceGuardian

Sainsbury and Asda said to be in talks about joint supermarket swoop



On the shopping list... Safeway's store in the Brunswick Centre, Bloomsbury, London, may be wrapped into takeover package

PHOTOGRAPH: GRAHAM TURNER

Safeway may be carved up

Roger Cowe and
Steve Busfield

ASDA and Sainsbury are believed to be planning a joint takeover bid for Safeway. The deal would create a powerful third force in British supermarkets and provide Sainsbury with a strong presence in Scotland and the North-east, where it has fewer than a dozen stores.

A takeover bid would almost certainly prompt a Monopolies Commission inquiry, the threat of which led Asda and Safeway to abandon merger talks last summer. Asda and Sainsbury would hope to win the argument by carving up the 460-strong Safeway chain. The break-up would see Sainsbury taking a number of Safeway stores in Scotland and the North-east, where an Asda/Safeway combination would be most dominant.

The two predators are known to have held talks last year, after the breakdown of Asda's talks with Safeway. The plan is thought to have been reactivated following the announcement that Sainsbury's chairman Lord Sainsbury is to step down at the annual meeting in September.

Following that announcement, Sainsbury is seen as having adopted a more aggressive strategy. Observers point to Tuesday's sale of a crucial stake in the US

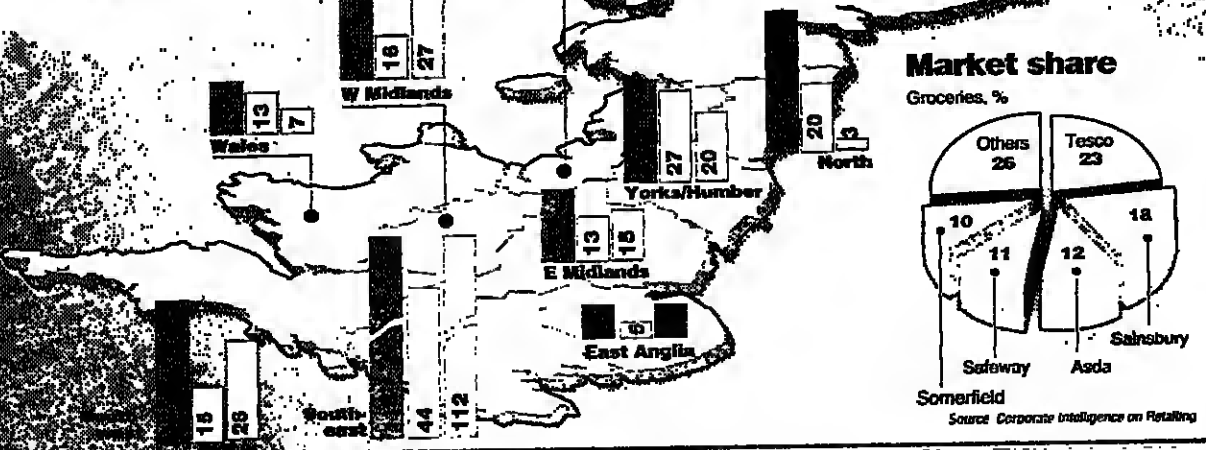
The battle for Safeway

Why a north/south split would suit Sainsbury and Asda

Key: Number of stores



*Stores over 25,000 sq ft



retailer, Giant, as an about-turn from Lord Sainsbury's insistence on keeping the shareholding in the hope of being able to take full control. Bill Myers, an analyst at Williams de Broe, said: "Once David Sainsbury has gone,

you have a different set of circumstances. It can start behaving like a normal company."

It is thought that previous talks between Asda and Sainsbury also broke down because of poor relations between Labour Party support-

er Lord Sainsbury and his opposite number, Archie Norman, who is a vice-chairman of the Conservative Party. Asda and Sainsbury refused to comment last

night. A spokeswoman for Sainsbury said: "This is rumour and speculation. We never comment on rumours."

Asda recently broke off discussions about a possible merger with the retail conglomerate Kingfisher, but has

claimed that it is not actively seeking a corporate move. Mr Norman said recently that he was not prepared to pay the kind of premium which would be necessary to win a takeover battle for Safeway.

Chief executive Allan Leighton has said the company's existing superstore format can continue to grow satisfactorily for five years. Recent sales levels are believed to have fallen below the chain's strong growth record, however.

A Safeway spokesman said he was not aware of any discussions and denied a new round of talks had taken place with Asda this spring.

A combination of Asda and Safeway would control almost a quarter of the grocery market, putting it in second place, behind Tesco.

Notebook

Banks treading dangerous path



Edited by
Alex Brummer

THE peak of the economic cycle is always the most dangerous time for banks. Having come through the good times with enhanced profits and capital, careless mistakes are made in lending and takeovers (see below).

The Bank of England recognises this in its annual Banking Act report which focuses on the domestic risks and, as might be expected at present, the hairier position in Asia. The Bank says that most of the bad debts tend to be put on at the back end of the economic cycle and notes solemnly that this requires vigilance.

It certainly does. Last time the biggest problems occurred in the property sector, so one supposes that mistake is not being repeated. However, there are looming problems. Consumer credit has been booming away for the banks, the fringe players and the credit card companies. Should the economy slow, there could be immediate difficulty in meeting repayments for the new kitchen or car deposit.

On a larger scale the biggest financial extravagance of this cycle is the management buyout, with banks and MBO specialists falling over themselves to outbid trade buyers. If the economy were to slow, some of the more leveraged situations, where it is more difficult to take the costs out, could quickly become the Magnet or Isocoles of this cycle, or more so.

Then there is Asia. The Bank clearly has worries, particularly about Indonesia and the effect of East Asia on banks from the region with UK licences. By all accounts the main UK clearers should escape relatively unscathed, particularly when compared with Deutsche Bank, which is ringing the alarms. But, as in the consumer credit area, some of the second-line UK banks, like the Royal Bank of Scotland, have been over-ambitious in the region and Indonesia may not yet be fully catered for.

No one is suggesting that the banking sector close to new business because the economy is slowing; that would only exacerbate the downturn. But to pretend the economic cycle has been abolished, simply because we have a Monetary Policy Committee and a golden rule governing fiscal policy, would be foolish in the extreme.

Dutch auctions

SPECULATION about consolidation in the banking sector continues apace. The latest possible date to come into focus is the Dutch bank ABN Amro, which has not been acquired.

tion-sby, and the New York based investment house, Bear Stearns, which has extensive operations at Canary Wharf.

The attraction to ABN Amro of a house like Bear Stearns is that it has a reputation for razor-sharp trading skills and would provide some trading pizzazz to ABN Amro's present calmer operations in the Midwest. US Chicago Corporation and Standard Federal Bancorporation, in commercial terms, Bear Stearns, which has a good reputation as a bond house, is admired for entrepreneurial spirit and is often likened to Goldman Sachs — except that, unlike Goldman, it is a quoted company with the employees holding a great deal of the stock.

As NatWest would testify, paint-by-numbers investment banks, in which disparate businesses are put together in an attempt to imitate some of the bigger players, are an incredibly difficult trick to pull off. The cultural differences between a trading house, such as Bear Stearns, valued at \$6.1 billion (£3.8 million), and a Dutch commercial bank, albeit with strong alliances, such as that with Rothschild, are profound. But in the current climate, with Citicorp/Travelers working its way through Nations Bank/Bank of America forging its strategy, and Continental banks merging with each other as if there is no tomorrow, particularly deals which build a transatlantic arch.

As this juggling takes place, British banks cannot exclude themselves. The possibility of a clearing bank merger of Barclays/NatWest now seems unlikely. NatWest, having failed to take the bait dangled in front of it. The best bets in the UK remain the underperforming former building societies — from the Halifax to Northern Rock. As their shares slip, the more attractive they become as targets.

Hi-tech graduate

ANYONE watching television can no longer be ignorant of the impact of the IT companies on US stock markets. The constant triumphalism of Nasdaq, over its star hi-tech stocks Microsoft and Intel, worth \$300 billion between them, places the UK's new vibrant hi-tech sector somewhat in the shade.

Nevertheless, there are useful second-line successes in the UK. The first British information technology firm into the FTSE 100 will be Misy's, which has just made the rankings.

The Misy's speciality is the supply of applications software to specialist sectors of the marketplace, from banking to health care after last year's acquisition of Medic (formerly a Nasdaq company) for \$53.6 million.

Misy's recent growth for Misy's has been by acquisition, which may reflect the Hanson culture of the group's executive chairman, Kevin Lomax. But, in targeting the financial and healthcare software sectors, Misy's could force its way further up the FTSE.

Gold price plummets in wake of panic Far East selling

Dan Atkinson

PANIC-stricken Far Eastern consumers facing economic meltdown and financial chaos have dumped well over 260 tonnes of gold coins, jewellery and other bullion on world markets during the past year, helping drive down the value of precious metals.

The gold bullion price closed last night at \$300.15 an ounce, one of its lowest levels, adjusted for inflation, in recent history. The Far Eastern jewellery glut threatens to drive it lower still.

The crisis belatedly slashed demand for gold in developing countries by 70 per cent during the first quarter of this year compared with the same period in 1997. The most extreme example of "disbanding" was in South Korea, where the state-sponsored "save the nation" gold collec-

tions saw the public hand over about 226 tonnes.

This was "unprecedented", according to the World Gold Council, whose first-quarter figures, released yesterday, exposed for the first time the scale of panic selling in the Far East in the wake of the currency crisis and economic dislocation that hit the Pacific tiger states in autumn last year.

In total, developing Asian countries saw a net selling back to the market of 268 tonnes — nearly 10 per cent of total annual world demand — and sales in Japan will have pushed the total higher still.

Overall, Indonesian demand crashed by 132 per cent in the first quarter against the same period last year. South Korean demand by 72 per cent and Malaysian by 80 per cent. In Japan, demand fell 40 per cent and in Singapore by 28 per cent.

TOURIST RATES — BANK SELLS

Australia 2.53	Germany 2.81	Malaysia 5.20	Singapore 2.81
Austria 19.76	Greece 488.58	Netherlands 3.02	South Africa 3.07
Belgium 57.31	Hong Kong 12.24	Norway 11.83	Spain 237.29
Canada 2.29	India 65.80	Sweden 12.30	Switzerland 2.35
Cyprus 0.82	Ireland 1.198	Taiwan 2.35	Turkey 385.450
Denmark 10.76	Israel 5.94	Thailand 2.790	USA 1.5983
Finland 0.61	Italy 2.790		
France 9.40			

Sourced by NatWest (excluding rupee, shekel and dollar)

Bank defies trend and says no to \$21.8bn bid

Mark Tran in New York
and Mark Milner

MELLON Bank bucked the merger trend among American banks yesterday when it forced Bank of New York to withdraw an unsolicited \$21.8 billion offer. Mellon simply refused to discuss the proposal, saying it preferred to stay independent.

Meanwhile, Dutch bank ABN Amro dismissed as "nonsense" a report that it was planning to buy the US securities house Bear Stearns. ABN already has a big presence in the US, particularly in the Midwest, and there has been constant speculation linking the bank with targets in North America and Europe.

Industry sources suggested such an acquisition could make sense by increasing ABN's securities distribution capacity in the crucial US market. Bank of New York announced its offer for Mellon

Bank in April, arguing that the combined company would be a better match against the banking groups being assembled in recent deals. Citicorp agreed to ally itself with the Travelers' financial services company with the goal of providing one-stop financial shopping for customers. NationsBank and BankAmerica are combining to form the first coast-to-coast bank.

Bank of New York claimed that key Mellon shareholders had expressed privately their overwhelming support for the proposed merger. But Mellon's management was unmoved and spurned the offer, not even bothering to meet Bank of New York officials for a detailed presentation of the bid.

"Mellon's refusal to meet with us and to have the opportunity for a constructive dialogue that would move this merger forward is inexplicable," complained Thomas Renyi, chairman and chief executive of Bank of New York. "Given that we will proceed

only on a consensual basis, we have decided to withdraw our proposal."

Wall Street doubts that Mellon can cling to its independence for long because there is pressure on it to boost value to shareholders. Two weeks ago, Mellon shares jumped amid rumours that Chase Manhattan was talking with Mellon about a merger.

Mellon has been seen widely as a takeover target since dropping a friendly \$18 billion (£11 billion) bid last October for CoreStates Financial. CoreStates rejected Mellon in favour of a deal with First Union Corporation.

Mr Renyi expressed dismay at Mellon's "dismissive and superficial treatment of this transaction", and said Mellon shareholders had been hurt by the refusal to talk. The offer would give Mellon shareholders "value far in excess of what we believe Mellon is capable of providing alone", and Bank of New York was willing to "engage in productive discussions at any time".

North Face, which is listed on America's Nasdaq exchange, was previously best known for the tents, sleeping bags and backpacks it makes for mountaineers and the ice picks and endurance equipment it makes for polar explorers.

More recently, though, it

has adopted cult status among the fashion-conscious American youth, with its chunky jackets now regularly sported by rappers and other top musicians.

Earlier this month, the company introduced its own line of footwear, concentrating on the hiking and trekking market.

The appointment follows Mr Fifield's acrimonious departure from EMI, which is thought to have been triggered by the board's refusal to appoint him chief executive of the entire organisation. The group has since been involved in a short-term takeover talks with Canada's Seagram.

In his previous decade in the job, Mr Fifield was credited with making EMI the world's third largest music company, propelling it into the charts as one of

the most profitable entertainment companies.

North Face is rather smaller than Mr Fifield's last enterprise, capitalised at just \$245 million (£150 million) and netting up sales of just over \$200 million during 1997.

But the company is expanding fast, with some industry analysts already suggesting it could be a takeover target for a rival such as Nike. Following last year's acquisition by Adidas of skiing equipment maker Salomon.

A keen skier, Mr Fifield has been a director of North Face for the past two years and, according to anecdotes, became interested in the company after having been impressed by its products.

He said: "As an avid skier and outdoor enthusiast, I firmly believe in this company's products, its culture and its entrepreneurial spirit. North Face has very significant growth opportunities."

Lucky Jim puts booty into sports equipment firm

Former music chief uses part of golden goodbye for £8.5m hello, writes Ian King

JIM FIFIELD, the former head of EMI Music, yesterday spent a substantial chunk of the controversial £12.5 million golden handshake he received when he left the company in April.

Mr Fifield, nicknamed "Lucky Jim" in the City for his lucrative pay and bonus package while at EMI, has invested \$14 million (£8.5 million) in North Face, a Californian sports equipment manufacturer, where he has been named president and chief executive.

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Sourced by NatWest (excluding rupee, shekel and dollar)

The Guardian
Racing
Victory for Irish

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The Guardian Thursday May 21 1998

Racing

Victory doubtful for Irish Guineas

Chris Hawkes

VICTORY NOTE, who produced an impressive turn of speed to win the French 2,000 Guineas earlier this month, looks set to miss out on the Irish equivalent at The Curragh on Saturday.

Peter Chapple-Hyam, the colt's trainer, explained yesterday: "We cannot run because the horse has been working very well and has come on since France."

However the Magnier, his principal owner, has other fancied entries in the race and they are keen to find another alternative. They have to see the best possible return on their huge investment in the sport and it is an understandable decision.

The Barry Hills-trained Le Faah, fourth in Victory Note at Longchamp, was pulled out

of the Irish Guineas yesterday, leaving Desert Prince and Fa-Eq to represent Britain.

Olivier Peslier, who will be reunited with Desert Prince at the Curragh, has been approached to ride High-Rise for Luca Cumani in the Vodafone Derby. After yesterday's first stage 27 remain in the Espoon Classic, including four Aidan O'Brien-trained colts.

Second Empire, King Of Kings, Salsola Springs and Chastel Royal.

At Goodwood yesterday Napoleon's Sister was a 20-1 winner of the Tripleprint Lape Stakes, a result with little apparent bearing on the Vodafone Oaks.

Napoleon's Sister is more likely to go for the Irish equivalent according to David Edworthy, her trainer, who explained how she came to be named:

"The same owner, Sean Coughlan, offered me Ridge-

wood Pearl and I turned her down. Obviously as she went on to win the Irish Guineas, Coronation Stakes and Breeders Cup Mile that was one of the biggest mistakes of my life. Sean asked me why I'd turned her down and I said, 'Who's ever heard of Napoleon's sister?'

The filly, ridden by Kieren Fallon, showed a nice turn of foot to catch Putnam and Enchant, who looked as if she would cruise up at one time but appeared to run out of stamina.

Napoleon's Sister was a 160,000 guineas purchase as a yearling and is the most costly horse Edworthy has ever had, but it looks like money well spent.

Richard Hills, suspended for irresponsible riding on Tuesday, seems to be suffering a crisis in confidence and judgment at the moment and the tide refused to turn for him yesterday when he finished second on Karyish and Mawred.

Karyish was probably beaten on merit by Beresford, although the winner led all the way and clearly got first run. But on Mawred, beaten a short-head by Henry Island in the Amro Rated Handicap, Hills gave the distinct impression he would have won if he had not been pocketed on the rails.

Mawred eventually got out, interfering with Beresford, ridden by Fallon, in the process but the stewards took no action.

Simon Sherwood is to take over the running of Uplands Stables in Upper Lambourn. He has been installed with immediate effect as the new trainer at the yard owned by Andrew Cohen, following the departure of Charlie Brooks.



Longshot... Napoleon's Sister responds to Kieren Fallon's urgings to spring a 20-1 surprise in the Lape Stakes at Goodwood yesterday

McCloy walks out on BHB post

Ron Cox

MATTHEW MCCLOY yesterday resigned as industry committee chairman of the British Horseracing Board, claiming he had been the victim of carefully choreographed attacks on his integrity and character.

His decision comes in the aftermath of Peter Savill's appointment last week as BHB chairman. McCloy, who had been the victim of carefully choreographed attacks on his integrity and character.

But MP Alan Meale, a

close ally of the new chairman, said McCloy had shown antagonism towards Savill and described his position as untenable.

Commenting on his decision to quit, McCloy said: "It follows that the recent sustained attacks on my integrity and character which I am advised have been carefully, and perhaps professionally, choreographed have succeeded."

"Some will attribute this decision to the recent appointment of Peter Savill, but if I was not prepared to work with Peter and support him I would have resigned on the spot."

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"Some will attribute this decision to the recent appointment of Peter Savill, but if I was not prepared to work with Peter and support him I would have resigned on the spot."

Goodwood Jackpot card with form guide

CHRIS HAWKES	TOP FORM
2.10	Parlo Fortune (imp)
2.40	Parlo Fortune (imp)
3.10	Parlo Fortune (imp)
3.40	Parlo Fortune (imp)
4.10	Parlo Fortune (imp)
4.40	Parlo Fortune (imp)

Straight six furlongs with toppling long providing right-hand turn in miles of more than 71. Gradients and sharp bends not ideal for long-striding horses. Going: Good to firm. A. Denotes winners. * Top form noted.

2.10 A.J. BULL MAIDEN STAKES 3YO	1m 11.2.2.2.2.2 (6 declared)
100/10	04-Parlo Fortune (imp) (C) 100/10
100/10	04-Parlo Fortune (imp) (C) 100/10
100/10	04-Parlo Fortune (imp) (C) 100/10
100/10	04-Parlo Fortune (imp) (C) 100/10
100/10	04-Parlo Fortune (imp) (C) 100/10
100/10	04-Parlo Fortune (imp) (C) 100/10

2.40 ROYAL SUSSEX REGIMENT FESTIVAL STAKES	1m 11.2.2.2.2.2 (6 declared)
100/10	04-Parlo Fortune (imp) (C) 100/10
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3.10 KIDSONS BIREY TROPHY H'CAP (SUNSHINE RACE)	1m 11.2.2.2.2.2 (12 declared)
100/10	04-Parlo Fortune (imp) (C) 100/10
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100/10	04-Parlo Fortune (imp) (C) 100/10
100/10	04-Parlo Fortune (imp) (C) 100/10
100/10	04-Parlo Fortune (imp) (C) 100/10

Exeter National Hunt programme

CHRIS HAWKES	TOP FORM
2.20	Parlo Fortune (imp)
2.40	Parlo Fortune (imp)
3.10	Parlo Fortune (imp)
3.40	Parlo Fortune (imp)
4.10	Parlo Fortune (imp)
4.40	Parlo Fortune (imp)

2.20 NATIONAL RIDING WEEK SELLING HURDLE	2m 21.11.2.2.2.2 (6 declared)
100/10	04-Parlo Fortune (imp) (C) 100/10
100/10	04-Parlo Fortune (imp) (C) 100/10
100/10	04-Parlo Fortune (imp) (C) 100/10
100/10	04-Parlo Fortune (imp) (C) 100/10
100/10	04-Parlo Fortune (imp) (C) 100/10
100/10	04-Parlo Fortune (imp) (C) 100/10

2.50 BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT GROUP NOVICE H'CAP HURDLE	2m 21.11.2.2.2.2 (6 declared)
100/10	04-Parlo Fortune (imp) (C) 100/10
100/10	04-Parlo Fortune (imp) (C) 100/10
100/10	04-Parlo Fortune (imp) (C) 100/10
100/10	04-Parlo Fortune (imp) (C) 100/10
100/10	04-Parlo Fortune (imp) (C) 100/10
100/10	04-Parlo Fortune (imp) (C) 100/10

3.20 SIMPSON EDWARDS NOVICE CHASE	2m 21.11.2.2.2.2 (6 declared)
100/10	04-Parlo Fortune (imp) (C) 100/10
100/10	04-Parlo Fortune (imp) (C) 100/10
100/10	04-Parlo Fortune (imp) (C) 100/10
100/10	04-Parlo Fortune (imp) (C) 100/10
100/10	04-Parlo Fortune (imp) (C) 100/10
100/10	04-Parlo Fortune (imp) (C) 100/10

3.50 SOUTH WEST RACING CLUB H'CAP CHASE	2m 21.11.2.2.2.2 (6 declared)
100/10	04-Parlo Fortune (imp) (C) 100/10
100/10	04-Parlo Fortune (imp) (C) 100/10
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3.50 SOUTH WEST RACING CLUB H'CAP CHASE	2m 21.11.2.2.2.2 (6 declared)
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3.50 SOUTH WEST RACING CLUB H'CAP CHASE	2m 21.11.2.2.2.2 (6 declared)
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3.50 SOUTH WEST RACING CLUB H'CAP CHASE	2m 21.11.2.2.2.2 (6 declared)
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3.50 SOUTH WEST RACING CLUB H'CAP CHASE	2m 21.11.2.2.2.2 (6 declared)
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3.50 SOUTH WEST RACING CLUB H'CAP CHASE	2m 21.11.2.2.2.2 (6 declared)
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Rugby League

Hughes enjoys second coming with Saints

Andy Wilson

ERIC HUGHES, sacked as the coach of St Helens in January 1996, yesterday returned to the club as football operations manager. It means he will be working alongside his successor Shaun McRae and Saints' chief executive David Howes, the man who fired him.

As Hughes has been given a contract until 2001, his appointment would appear to confirm that McRae will leave Knowsley Road when his contract expires at the end of the season, if not sooner. It must also raise serious questions about Howes's future with the club.

"Nobody's job is threatened by my arrival," insisted Hughes yesterday. But he added: "I will be overseeing all football matters and that will include working with the directors to appoint any head coach in the future. It will be a very challenging position and will obviously have to be handled delicately."

"I will spend the first few weeks assessing the whole coaching structure in the club. I was surprised at being asked back. That took plenty of courage by the directors who sacked me in the first place. Perhaps they thought they were wrong the first time."

Significantly there was a shake-up at St Helens during the winter when Eric Ashton resigned as chairman and was succeeded by Tom Ellard. Saints have had a troubled start to the season, going out of the Challenge Cup in the quarter-final at Wigan and suffering a heavy home defeat at the hands of their arch-rivals in a

Super League fixture, at a time when Howes and McRae had been forced to ask the players to take a pay cut to comply with the salary cap.

There has also been speculation about McRae's future; he has been strongly linked with a return to Australia while Howes has been discussed as a possible chief executive for any new Super League franchise in Wales.

But it is hard to see how the appointment of Hughes, and the behind-the-scenes tension it will surely cause, can help Saints for the remainder of this season. McRae retains responsibility for selecting and coaching the team, starting at Halifax on Sunday.

Terry O'Connor, the Great Britain prop who has not played for Wigan since the Challenge Cup final, has again been left out of the Warriors team for tomorrow's Super League match against visiting Huddersfield and will play for the A team at the McAlpine Stadium tonight.

The Hull coach Peter Walsh yesterday ruled out a bid for St Helens' Karlie Hammond, who was listed at a "non-negotiable" £150,000 on Tuesday.

Shaun Edwards and his Bradford Bulls team-mate Tahl Rashana have been summoned to appear at Bradford Magistrates Court on June 15 charged with assault. It follows an incident outside a pizza restaurant in Wibsey on April 27, after the Bulls' victory over Hull at The Boulevard the day before.

Castleford have announced a new three-year sponsorship deal with Repare & Carr, a national domestic-appliance repair company based in Noxanton.

World Cup referee predicts French farce

Durkin's red-card warning

Martin Thorpe finds widespread confusion over Fifa's ruling on the tackle from behind

THE World Cup finals are in danger of being turned into a farce by Fifa's new rules on the tackle from behind.

England's coach Glenn Hoddie believes that matches could be reduced to eight a side because of the new directives imposed by world football's governing body. And England's referee at the tournament, Paul Durkin, admitted: "It might well be that the team with the best discipline

players", there are growing concerns over the way the law has been implemented.

There is widespread confusion over what exactly constitutes "a player's safety" but just as worrying is the fact that the first outing for the new rules — which come into operation worldwide on July 1 — will be in football's "biggest" tournament starting on June 10.

Most players will have had about seven weeks from the end of their domestic seasons to the beginning of the World Cup to get used to the changes. But many will find such a quick adjustment impossible and the result could be a record number of red cards.

"I'm concerned about the changes," admitted Hoddie. "The way some players defend and tackle, it's human nature and it's difficult to change the habit of a lifetime."

Yesterday Fifa said the timing of the rule changes followed convention. "Any such rule modifications are always decided on in March and introduced on July 1," said its spokesman Keith Cooper.

Fifa's directive states that "A tackle from behind which endangers the safety of an opponent must be sanctioned as a serious foul play, punishable by a red card." Such tackles had previously warranted a yellow card.

Durkin explained: "You can tackle from behind as long as you don't touch the man. Defenders will have to be 100 per cent certain in their judgment when they go for the ball they get the ball and the ball only."

But what constitutes "safety" under the new rules? "A lot of people probably still don't understand the interpretation," admitted Durkin. "You will have 35 referees from all over the world and you cannot hide from the fact that there will be varying



Grounds for dismissal... if England's Paul Ince repeats this type of challenge in France it will be early-bath time

PHOTOGRAPH: SHAWN BUTTERILL

interpretations. Even the wording in the laws of the game is different in different languages."

For Hoddie there is another major concern. "Surely the best referees should progress through the tournament as do the best teams," he said.

But this is not the case. Fifa has guaranteed each referee one game in the opening round, with future participation in the tournament dependent on performance over that 90 minutes.

"It is a problem," said Hoddie. "Are they going to referee just to keep Fifa happy so they stay in the World Cup? It is a pressure they don't need to be under and I think some of them are just going to go bang, letter of the law. We

might end up with eight versus eight. It's ridiculous."

Even Durkin admitted: "The pressure on referees will be immense. Fifa has told us they want these guidelines strictly adhered to. It could well be that I go out there with a little bit of self-preservation in mind and possibly over-react, though I would like to think I won't."

While Durkin has done his best to guide the England players through the rule change during his week-long stint at the squad's training camp, even this has been hampered.

He had hoped to show the players the official Fifa referees' guidance video which highlights the sort of tackles which will now deserve a red

card. But it has still not been approved by the Fifa referees committee and will not be available for the players to see this week, though Fifa hopes to send the Football Association a copy before the World Cup starts.

Despite this Keith Cooper believes there is no need to worry about a glut of red cards. "Only time will tell if these fears are justified but I personally don't think they are," he said.

Durkin, though, is less convinced. "The likelihood is that there could be a spate of red cards in the World Cup," he said. And, indeed, when the new rules were recently tried out in the United States the number of red cards quadrupled.

Iran fire their World Cup coach and seek a diamond polisher

IRAN, who sacked the coach Thomas Ivic after a 7-1 thrashing by Roma Tuesday's friendly, were yesterday greeted by around 200 fans on their arrival in Milan for Saturday's warm-up with Internazionale.

The technical adviser Jalal Talebi has been put in charge for the Inter match although an official said the federation may hire somebody else "because Talebi is not a coach".

Ivic, a 64-year-old Croat who last week said that "Iran were like a diamond that just needed to be polished", was hired on a six-month contract in January in place of the Brazilian Valdeir Vieira, who steered them through the play-offs.

A header by Gabriel Batistuta gave Argentina an unconvincing 1-0 win against Chile, who missed an 89th-minute penalty. In Mendoza, Nigeria lost 4-0 to the Swiss champions Grasshoppers in Zurich.

Austria's midfielder Gilbert Prasannig has torn a cruciate ligament and will be replaced in his country's World Cup squad by Martin Amerhauser.

Premiership still booming at box office

THERE was further evidence of the English game's rude health yesterday in the Premier League crowd figures for last season.

For the first time since it was reduced to 20 clubs in 1995 more than 11 million watched the 760 Premiership matches. The average gate was 29,189, an increase of 2.65 per cent on the figure of 28,434 for the 1996-97 season.

Manchester United once again proved the league's biggest draw and gained the unique distinction of enticing more than one million spectators through the Old Trafford turnstiles. However, Derby County took pride of place for the biggest rise, attendances going up by 82.7 per cent at their new ground.

Attendances — season 1997/8

Team	Total 97/8	Ave 97/8	Ave 96/7	Diff (%)
Arsenal	722,959	38,050	37,821	0.61
Aston Villa	696,587	36,136	36,027	0.30
Barnsley	350,526	18,449	11,356	62.46
Blackburn	479,804	25,253	24,947	1.23
Bolton	462,693	24,352	15,826	53.58
Chelsea	625,125	32,901	27,001	21.85
Coventry	374,634	19,718	19,625	0.47
Crystal Palace	417,675	21,983	15,065	46.57
Derby	552,987	29,106	17,893	62.70
Everton	672,140	35,376	36,186	-2.24
Leeds	658,507	34,711	32,109	8.10
Leicester	391,689	20,615	20,184	2.14
Liverpool	771,937	40,628	39,777	2.14
Man Utd	1,048,185	55,165	55,081	0.01
Newcastle	696,828	36,690	36,406	0.79
Sheff Wed	545,496	28,709	25,933	11.4
Southampton	288,017	15,169	15,099	0.40
Tottenham	553,721	29,143	31,067	-6.19
West Ham	474,369	24,967	23,242	7.42
Wimbledon	316,824	16,675	15,156	10.02
Total	11,091,773	29,189	28,434	2.65

Manchester United give up their chase for Foe as Gregory warns that Yorke will not leave Villa

MANCHESTER United will set their sights on other targets after the chairman Martin Edwards admitted yesterday it was unlikely they would sign Marc-Vivien Foe.

United have yet to hear Foe's response to their final offer, believed to be £5 million, for the Cameroon international but Edwards is increasingly pessimistic. The French champion reportedly wants £8 million for the defensive midfielder and Edwards is adamant that United will not be held to ransom.

United had discussed personal terms with Foe and the 28-year-old was keen to move to Old Trafford.

The Aston Villa manager John Gregory is determined to fight any attempt by United to sign the striker Dwight Yorke.

"As far as I am concerned, Dwight is not leaving," he said. "He has two years left

on his contract and is not going anywhere. United may try but I am not interested."

United, meanwhile, are determined to hold on to the striker Ole Gunnar Solskjaer, a possible target for Valencia or Atletico Madrid.

Solskjaer, who is training with Norway's World Cup squad in Oslo, signed a seven-year contract last year which ties him to United until 2004 and says he is happy to stay at Old Trafford. "We see his future here as well," said Edwards. "We have not had any contact from the two clubs mentioned."

Jim Whitley, the Manchester City midfielder, has turned his back on Wales and their offer of an international future to continue his career with Northern Ireland. He claimed it was "the toughest decision of my football life".

Northern Ireland's manager Lawrie McMenemy

made a string of phone calls to Whitley to persuade the 23-year-old to change his mind after Wales named the 23-year-old full-back in their squad for games in Malta and Tunisia.

Wales were alerted to the prospect of snatching Whitley when it was discovered that he went to school in North Wales, was Welsh speaking and is a big friend of Leicester's Robbie Savage.

Derby County are being linked with a move for Haris Vucelja, a 24-year-old full-back with the Argentinean First Division club Rosario Central, whose president, Victor Vesco, said last night that he was expecting the Rams to pay around £2.5 million.

Watford have appointed Howard Wells, 51, as chief executive. He is currently chief executive of the Sports Council.

Results

Football

DONOGAL U-21 TOURNAMENT
N Ireland 1-1 Scotland (1-1)
N Ireland 2-1 Scotland (2-1)

WORLD CUP WARM-UP MATCHES
Argentina 1-0 Chile 0-2
Ghana 1-0 Nigeria 0-0

Rugby Union
Allied Nations play-offs: Scotland 13-10 Ireland (13-10)
Scotland 13-10 Ireland (13-10)

Golf
Senior Club Professional Championship (County): Second-round leaders 198 J. Ross (198 J. Ross) 67, 71, 140, 4-0 (198 J. Ross) 67, 71, 140, 4-0

Tennis
ATP World Team Cup (Quebec): First round: New Zealand 2-0 Australia 2-0, 1-1 (New Zealand 2-0, 1-1)

Baseball
American League: Boston 5 Chicago 2, Toronto 2 Tampa Bay 1, NY Yankees 5 Baltimore 2 Kansas City 3 Cleveland 16, Detroit 4 St Louis 10 Seattle 4, Anaheim 4 Oakland 3 (10 innings)

Baseball
National League: NY Mets 7 Cincinnati 3 (10 innings), NY Mets 5 Cincinnati 3 (10 innings), NY Mets 5 Cincinnati 3 (10 innings)

Baseball
CFL: Edmonton 20-10 Calgary 10, Stampeders 20-10 Calgary 10, Stampeders 20-10 Calgary 10

Baseball
CFL: Edmonton 20-10 Calgary 10, Stampeders 20-10 Calgary 10, Stampeders 20-10 Calgary 10

Baseball
CFL: Edmonton 20-10 Calgary 10, Stampeders 20-10 Calgary 10, Stampeders 20-10 Calgary 10

Baseball
CFL: Edmonton 20-10 Calgary 10, Stampeders 20-10 Calgary 10, Stampeders 20-10 Calgary 10

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CFL: Edmonton 20-10 Calgary 10, Stampeders 20-10 Calgary 10, Stampeders 20-10 Calgary 10

Baseball
CFL: Edmonton 20-10 Calgary 10, Stampeders 20-10 Calgary 10, Stampeders 20-10 Calgary 10

Dundee lined up by Evans

Ian Ross

LIVERPOOL are ready to offer Karlsruhe £2 million for Sean Dundee to fill the gap created by Robbie Fowler's long-term absence through injury. The 25-year-old South Africa-born striker, now a German citizen, was close to a place in the World Cup squad but is keen to play in England.

Dundee almost joined Newcastle two years ago — around the time that the Liverpool manager Roy Evans was first made aware of his potential.

With Fowler still some seven months away from full fitness after corrective surgery on a knee ligament injury, Evans has only Karlheinz Riedla as a partner for Michael Owen.

Nigel Spackman, the former Sheffield United manager who played for Liverpool in the late 1980s, may return as a member of Evans's coaching staff if his application to become manager of Norwich City fails.

Rangers yesterday insisted that a new Uefa ruling banning club owners with a stake in more than one team from entering the same competition would not hinder their European quest.

The new dictum could have serious repercussions for the club, who are 25 per cent owned by the British investment trust company AER, who also own AER Athens, have stakes in Vienezia and Slavia Prague and are considering buying the French club Bordeaux, sparking fears for Rangers' participation in next season's Uefa Cup.

But Campbell Ogilvie, the Rangers director/secretary, said: "I don't know what ENIC's stake is in these other clubs but they don't control us. David Murray has the controlling interest in Rangers, so I don't believe this will affect us."

The Bolton winger Alan Thompson is wanted by a host of top clubs but Everton are believed to be the only Premiership club so far to have agreed the asking price of £3.5 million. Their manager Howard Kendall is also attempting to lure a £2.5 million deal which would see the centre-back Craig Sherry join his former club Derby County in exchange for the utility player Lee Carsley.

The Sunderland striker Kevin Phillips, scorer of 34 goals this season, has been voted National Player of the Year. He makes his Wembley debut in the First Division play-off final against Charlton on Monday, when he hopes to take Sunderland back to the Premiership.

Swimming

Smith pulls out of meet

IRELAND's triple Olympic champion Michelle Smith, also known by her married name De Bruin, yesterday withdrew from this weekend's French national championships in Amiens. Smith, who swims for a Paris club, was to compete in the 100 and 800 metres freestyle.

The 28-year-old is currently under investigation by the sport's world governing body, FINA, for allegedly tampering with a urine sample after an out-of-competition test in January.

Last month International Olympic Committee officials said the sample contained enough alcohol to be fatal. The head of the IOC's medical commission, Prince Alexandre de Merode, said the high level appeared to indicate manipulation. If she is found guilty of doping, she could be banned for life.

Meanwhile leading coaches in Australia have been lobbying to have China banned from next year's Pan Pacific Championships in Sydney unless an independent investigation is carried out into allegations of widespread drug use.

Sport in brief

Basketball

A day after being named the NBA's Most Valuable Player for the fifth time, Michael Jordan scored 41 points as the Chicago Bulls beat the Indiana Pacers 104-98 to take a 2-0 lead in the Eastern Conference finals.

Cycling

Nicola Micali broke away on the Poggio Fodonte hill to win the fourth stage of the Giro d'Italia from Viareggio to Porto Santo Stefano yesterday in another all-Italian finish. Michele Bartoli was

Ice Hockey

Boxing

Ulfster's Wayne McCullough stayed on course for a title fight against the WBC super-middleweight champion Erik Morales of Mexico with a split points decision over the Colombian Juan Polo Perez in Corpus Christi, Texas.

Cricket

WORLD CUP: In the 1st round, Australia 2-0 South Africa 2-0, India 2-0 Pakistan 2-0, Sri Lanka 2-0 Bangladesh 2-0, Zimbabwe 2-0 Kenya 2-0, Netherlands 2-0 New Zealand 2-0

Baseball

WORLD CUP: In the 1st round, Australia 2-0 South Africa 2-0, India 2-0 Pakistan 2-0, Sri Lanka 2-0 Bangladesh 2-0, Zimbabwe 2-0 Kenya 2-0, Netherlands 2-0 New Zealand 2-0

Baseball

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Baseball

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WORLD CUP: In the 1st round, Australia 2-0 South Africa 2-0, India 2-0 Pakistan 2-0, Sri Lanka 2-0 Bangladesh 2-0, Zimbabwe 2-0 Kenya 2-0, Netherlands 2-0 New Zealand 2-0

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Cricket

South Africa provide toughest test of all as England start fine tuning for World Cup

Mike Selvey on the importance of today's opening Texaco Trophy match at The Oval

ENGLISH cricket is a year into the New Age. Twelve months ago, before the one-day matches against the Aussies, the England selectors and coaching staff began to think seriously about international limited-overs cricket. Embarrassment and humiliation can set the brain cells into overdrive and England had been embarrassed in the shorter form of the game for 18 months, almost without respite. Enough was enough. Eight wins in 12 matches since then have given rise to optimism, even if all four defeats came in a row at the end of the winter and were bubble-bursts of the first order. Nothing daunted, England have next year's World Cup in their sights. They have a strategy and the nucleus of a squad and, all being well, the

regarded as weak in Test match terms, that contrasts favourably with England's one-day achievements. Six South Africans — Gary Kirsten, Kallis, Cronje, Daryll Cullinan, Pollock and Jonty Rhodes — average more than 30 runs per innings, the first two more than 40. Kirsten, at 45.47 with eight centuries, already compares favourably with anyone who has played this form of cricket. Of those with 4,000 runs, for example — and Kirsten has 3,547 from 87 games — only Viv Richards (47) and Brian Lara (46.96) average more. The leading England batsman on display is Nick Knight. He averages 45.38, followed by Graham Thorpe (40.05) and Alec Stewart, whose 32.32 is below the top six South Africans. England prefer run chases but they need more authority in the top order without diluting the depth of the batting. Thorpe, a master at working the ball around the field from the word go, has provided that to some extent and his absence from the latter part of the series in the West Indies was a factor in England's subsequent defeat. Yesterday it was revealed that the back is still troubling him and he will have a scan some time in the next 10 days. Nasser Hussain has been drafted into the squad as a precaution and will play should Thorpe not be fit. A number of England players — in particular Chris Lewis and the new caps Darren Maddy and Chris Adams — will be under particular scrutiny this week but none more so than the captain Adam Hobbie. In Sharjah his man-management and leadership in general were first-rate. In the Caribbean, on the other hand, when he was handed the role again following Mike Atherton's resignation, there was room for doubt in his personal performances, his tactical awareness and his authority when under pressure. His appointment for this series rather than the whole summer is an act of faith tempered with caution by selectors who regard the winter as a learning curve. They would love to see him do his reputation justice and lead England on to the World Cup, but whether anything less than a win here will be sufficient to satisfy the demands remains to be seen. If he comes through, however, he will be deemed capable of anything.

Eight wins from 12 matches have given rise to optimism even if the four defeats came last in a row

players will be fine-tuned over the next eight months.

The process begins at The Oval today against South Africa, currently recognised as the most disciplined, focused and technically sound in the business. In the past year they have won 18 of 22 matches played. Examinations do not come any tougher than this for England, who have won only once in their past eight meetings — all of them abroad.

That said, though, the home side usually have the advantage of complete freedom of selection in the one-day games whereas touring sides are restricted in choice and have brought squads geared primarily to Test matches. England have been beaten only twice in the past 15 Texaco Trophy competitions. This one could be the exception that proves the rule, for the leading South Africa Test players possess skills that are in some cases even better expressed in the one-day game. Of their first-choice side only Roger Tienachius, the Boland all-rounder, is missing from today's game; he has been forced to go home with a dislocated shoulder.

There is variety in the tourists' bowling, with Shaun Pollock and Lance Klusener sharing the new ball, Allan Donald providing a cutting edge in mid-innings and Hansie Cronje and Jacques Kallis also bowling seam. Their fielding, at times, borders on the miraculous. But it is the batting,

England (from): N V Knight, FA J Stewart, C J Adams, O L Smith, A P Hobbie, A A Gough, C Llewellyn, A P Gille, R D B Croft, O Gough, O P Thorpe, R A Munn, A D Brown, A C Fraser. SOUTH AFRICA (probable): G Kirsten, P J Lousberg, J H Kallis, O J Cullinan, T W J Groot, J H Kallis, S M Pollock, J A Gough, L Klusener, P L Symcox, A A Donald, M Vaughan, P Willey and J C Beldermon.



Back in the old routine... Chris Lewis bowls under the watchful eye of the coach David Lloyd at The Oval

Hobbie's mettle on trial

David Hopps finds the one-day captain confident of recapturing his Sharjah touch

THE publicity campaign for next summer's World Cup in England is under way but do not ask Adam Hobbie to dwell upon it. Hobbie dare not look beyond Sunday evening and the outcome of a Texaco Trophy series against South Africa that will go a long way towards determining his own chances of surviving as England's one-day captain until this time next year. Hobbie's considerable feel-good factor is undeniable. He possesses a boldness which is capable of firing both his side on the field and a new, young World Cup audience off it. But the euphoria which greeted England's victory in Sharjah last autumn, a tournament they had previously pood-pooded, made a subsequent 4-1 defeat in the one-day series in the Caribbean all the more bewildering. Hobbie's reappointment for the three games against South Africa is now regarded as a

trial, with not only his batting but his captaincy deemed to be under scrutiny. "Everyone keeps mentioning the World Cup but the most important thing is the next three games," Hobbie said. South Africa's one-day record under Bob Woolmer is unrivalled — they have won 71 per cent of their matches since 1994, victories in 18 of their last 22 — but Hobbie's confidence that England can prevail has been bolstered before the first ball has even been bowled. In place of the unvarying collection of medium-pacers assembled in the West Indies is an England attack of more variety: the belligerence of Darren Gough and simple skills of Chris Lewis with the new ball; and the tenacious slow left-arm of Ashley Giles, who is expected to be preferred to Angus Fraser, to complement the off-spin of Robert Croft. "Chris Lewis is an explosive cricketer with the ability to knock over a couple

of wickets when nothing much is happening, and the same is true of Goughie," says Hobbie. "In the West Indies that was one of the areas we fell down in. There were times when we were looking very shaky — myself, Dougie Brown, Salham, Fleming. I couldn't throw the ball to anyone different. Even before I have made a decision I feel I have an advantage compared to the West Indies. I was lacking a little bit of confidence in the West Indies, which was odd because I haven't really come across that before. I had

lost touch with what was going on and lacked faith in my decision-making." If Hobbie's inactivity in the Caribbean — he played only in the Port of Spain Test — is a sign of his inactivity in the county, it is a sign of his inactivity in the county. He remains convinced of his playing ability, regarding himself as one of the best No. 6 batsmen in the country, and confident that he has both the variety and mental resilience to bowl at the end of an innings. England's chief uncertainty this morning is the fitness of Graham Thorpe, whose latest bout of back spasms in a different area from those which afflicted him in the West Indies — has led to Nasser Hussain being called up as stand-by to bat at No. 4. Thorpe and Hussain are similar one-day players, both looking to manoeuvre the ball around in the middle of the innings, but Thorpe's success rate — an average of 40 against Hussain's 19 — is markedly superior. When it comes to World Cup last chances, Hussain will recognise the feeling most of all.



Hobbie... faith in ability

Golf

Woosnam up for Ryder job

David Davies THERE are still 432 shopping bags or maybe shanking days to the next Ryder Cup match but already positions are being taken and claims staked for the prestigious, and vacant, position of Europe captain. No sooner yesterday, had a former captain in Bernard Gallacher opined that Mark James might be a good choice than yet another player involved in recent European successes declared his intent. Ian Woosnam, to the surprise of many, said that if he were asked to be captain in Boston in September next year, he would immediately accept. He added that, if such a proposition were made, he

would not consider playing in the team, even if he qualified. "There is just no way you could do both jobs," he said. "I'd accept the captaincy any time it was offered. It's just a great honour. I'd do it next year in America and of course it might go to Wales and I know the club I represent, Celtic Manor, would want to hide for it." Woosnam has played in the last eight Ryder Cups and been an immense influence in the fourball and foursomes series. During the early years he was expected to play in every match and help provide the bulk of Europe's points. Woosnam was openly critical of the way the last captain, Severiano Ballesteros, conducted matters, feeling there was not enough communica-

tion with the team. He felt that particularly when he was left out of the first day's play at Valderrama, despite admitting beforehand that he was not in top form. But, if the frequently fiery Woosnam were to become captain, he is likely to adopt the same intuitive approach as did Ballesteros. He would not lack passion. Gallacher's choice, James, would bring a more cerebral approach and, as a competitor in seven of the matches, he would not lack experience. He was an appointed assistant to Ballesteros at Valderrama but Woosnam, when asked what influence James had on the Spaniard, laughed the knowing laugh of a man who recognises that the only influence on Seve is Seve himself.

Hockey

Women begin the Wright way

UCILLA WRIGHT, the England team's youngest player, scored on her World Cup debut here in the Frockey Stadium yesterday as they beat India 1-0 in their opening pool match, writes Paul Rowley in Amsterdam. And a cracking goal it was. The 19-year-old student hit a rasping drive when the ball bobbed towards her after England's second corner of the match in the 19th minute. However, England's performance rather paled beside that of the Australian women, the holders and Olympic champions. Four years ago they started shockingly, losing 2-1 to a poor Russia side. Yesterday they cruised to a 5-0 victory over Scotland. England's men start their campaign today, against Spain.

Rugby Union

Howley is kept waiting in squad of uncertainty

Paul Rees

ROBERT HOWLEY's five-match reign as the Wales captain hangs in the balance after a pointed snub was delivered to the Lions' scrum-half yesterday. Though chosen in the 30-strong squad for next month's tour of Zimbabwe and South Africa, Howley will have to wait until June 1 to find out if he will retain the asterisk by his name. While stalling on naming a captain and already a fortnight late in releasing the names of the squad, the Welsh Rugby Union also refuses to be rushed into finding a replacement for Kevin Bowring as national coach. Bowring parted company with his employers "by mutual consent" this month after a turbulent Five Nations Championship campaign. The union's technical committee had lined up the former Swansea coaching director Mike Ruddock, who now works for the Irish RFL, but the Welsh union's general committee will stick to its pledge to trawl the world to find the best available coach. The Auckland Blues and New Zealand coach Graham Henry, courted by England a year ago, has declared his willingness to open negotiations. "It has always been my ambition to coach a national side and, if Wales want to talk, I will be happy to listen," Henry said. A Wales squad including 10 uncapped players will be marshalled in South Africa and Zimbabwe by a caretaker coach, Pontypridd's Dennis John. "I was only told of my appointment on Tuesday night and I need time to talk

to the players," said John, a former Wales coach. "I want a few days to resolve the captaincy issue."

Wales embark on the six-match tour after ending the championship with a 51-0 defeat by France but, despite also having 16 players unavailable, including Neil Jenkins and Scott Gibbs who were part of the successful Lions' side in South Africa last summer, John remains upbeat. "I am always positive. There have been too many negative things written and said in Wales recently but this is the chance of the lifetime for the players." While John has right of veto over the composition of the squad he did not draw it up. It was a combined effort, the WRU's rugby director Terry Cobner collaborating with a number of leading Welsh coaches. Bowring had selected his squad before his departure and Ruddock spoke to players over the weekend in the belief that the Union would resolve the coaching issue of Bowring's successor this week.

Confusion reigns. "No offer was made to Mike," said Cobner. "He is not out of the frame, far from it. The timing of all this is not the responsibility of the WRU but of the previous national coach." Wales continue to dig deep — deep holes. **SCOTLAND:** Duncan Weatherley (Swansea), D Weatherley (Llanelli), R Jones (Swansea), Woodard (Ebbw Vale), James (Pontypridd), Stewart (Richmond), L Davies (Cardiff), Taylor (Swansea), A Thomas (Swansea), Hayward (Ebbw Vale), Bowring (Cardiff), John (Pontypridd). **FOREWAHLERS:** Lewis (Cardiff), Morris (Swansea), J Davies (Richmond), A Evans (Swansea), Jenkins (Swansea), R Williams (Richmond), Marshall (Swansea), Ough (Newport), Jones (Ebbw Vale), Appleby (Swansea), S Thomas (Cardiff), J Jones (Cardiff), Williams (Pontypridd), S Gwynne (Richmond), Wyatt (Llanelli).

Premiership play-off, first leg

Rotherham 13 London Irish 16

Irish spared by Lax approach

David Irvine

THE luck of the Irish was in evidence at Cliffo Lane last night when the Exiles, fighting to keep their elite status, came from behind to beat passionate Premiership Two opponents. On this form Rotherham will lay on an intriguing second leg on Sunday at Sunbury. Rotherham really should have won. Midway through the second half they "scored" the try of the match when inter-passing by Greg Austin and Mike Umaga opened the way for Dean Lax to cruise round from the corner flag to the posts. But he celebrated too early, collided with Justin Bishop and, to general horror, dropped the ball. The match had kicked off in suitably tense, sultry conditions and Niall Woods punished Rotherham with a penalty after only two minutes. But when the wing then made a tight tackle on Gavin Webster, the Yorkshireman's fly-half Binns saw his attempt hit the post. Binns took every opportunity to open the game up. It was from his grub-kick that Rotherham staged the night's opening attack as Jon Shepherd downed Bishop. Only a timely intervention by Conor O'Shea cleared the danger. With a 3,000 crowd urging them on, and Webster and Austin in impressive form, Rotherham pressed hard and in one storming period only desperate Exiles' tackling de-

nied Webster, Binns and the full-back Mike Umaga.

But Lax crossed dramatically on the half-hour. Schmid started the move from a scrum with John Dudley in support and as Binns swung the ball wide to the winger, Umaga made the overlying to send Lax side-stepping past Brendan Venter. Four minutes before the interval Binns kicked a penalty after Rotherham had almost crossed. Right on half-time Woods landed his second penalty for the Irish but it was against the run of play after Bishop had made a loag clearance and Umaga was caught trying to run the ball.

But Irish came back stung into a more adventurous mood by persistence. Binns took the lead when Bishop weaved his way over after good work by Mark McCall and Woods converted. Lax's blunder and a third Woods penalty kept the Irish on top but, just as it seemed Rotherham's self-control and fitness was disintegrating, they staged a marvellous finale. Lax was only just caught at the flag after a great break by Shepherd and Rotherham's persistence. Binns kicked his second penalty. **SCOTLAND:** Rotherham Try: Lax. Conversion: Binns. Second Half: 13-16. London Irish Try: Schmid. Conversion: Woods. Penalties: Woods 3. Rotherham: Umaga: Lax, Shepherd, Austin, Dawson, Binns, Eastley, Ashley, Warham, Bunting, Dudley, Webster, Venter, O'Shea (capt), Bishop, Jones, Fitzpatrick, Keir, Halpin, Harvey, O'Kelly, Spicer, Dawson, Richmond. Rotherham: 13 London Irish: 16.

Loss of Greenwood from tour turns into Windo of opportunity

TONY WINDO has been called in to the England squad for the tour of the southern hemisphere. The Gloucester loose-head prop fills the vacancy in the 37-man squad created by the withdrawal of Will Greenwood with a shoulder injury; there will be no direct replacement for the Leicester centre, writes Robert Armstrong. Windo, 29, is a mobile, multi-skilled former England under-21 international whose consistent form helped Gloucester finish fifth in Premiership One this season. The English coach Clive Woodward could now use an all-Gloucester front row during the seven-match tour, with the club's hooker Phil Greening and tight-head prop Full Vickery already in the squad. Woodward explained: "One of the elements I would like to come out of the trip is a firm idea of which forwards can raise their game at international level and I believe Tony will provide ample competition for other members of the

squad vying for his position. I already have a number of players in the squad who can cover the position of centre." The England squad fly to Brisbane for the first leg of their tour next Wednesday in preparation for the Test against Australia at Ballymore on June 6. Meanwhile the former France back-row Laursant Cabannes, out of contract after two years at Harlequins, has joined Richmond. Quins, who finished 10th in the Premiership, are expected to discard several players during the summer. The 34-year-old forward, capped 49 times, said: "Richmond play an exciting brand of rugby. They have an excellent side and I have joined them with a mind to winning honours." The Richmond director of rugby John Kingston added: "His ability to play six, seven or eight will be invaluable, although he is well aware Ben Clarke, Adam Vander, Robbie Hutton and Scott Quinnell [all current contenders] will contest the spots fiercely."



SportsGuardian

Mijatovic strike condemns Italians to second year of heartbreak

European Cup final: Juventus 0 Real Madrid 1

Real grab their chance of glory

David Lacey in Amsterdam

AN impudent goal from Pedja Mijatovic 28 minutes from the end of a final rich in promise but let down by poor finishing last night gave Real Madrid their first European Cup triumph for 32 years. The Montenegrin punished a moment of slackness in the Juventus defence after Real had steadily gained a grip of the match after a nervous start.

Total triumphs

Real Madrid: winners
1956, 1957, 1958, 1959, 1960, 1966, 1998 (seven times).
Juventus: winners
1985, 1996 (twice).

final and seeking to regain the prize surprisingly snatched from their grasp by Borussia Dortmund last season, were the team in form. Champions of Italy once again, they were expected to beat opponents whose results since the New Year had been disappointing.

Yet if anything could stir Real Madrid last night it was surely their illustrious past. Few teams, even now, have approached the standards of attacking play set by the Real sides that monopolised the first five European Cup tournaments in the latter half of the Fifties, and while they had only won the trophy once more, in 1966, there was sufficient quality among last night's players to take on Juventus in a battle of wits.

Clearly Real needed to keep their wits about them. With Edgar Davids and Angelo Di Livio quick to find space to Zinedine Zidane's left and right there was immediate support for the Juventus strikers, Alessandro Del Piero and Filippo Inzaghi, although the first shot of the night was a 25-yard drive from Didier Deschamps which sent Bodo Illgner scurrying along his goal line to make the save.

Then Clarence Seedorf, Real's Dutch answer to



Double Dutch... Real Madrid's Holland international Clarence Seedorf, left, gets the upper hand as he battles with his compatriot Edgar Davids

PHOTOGRAPH: CLIVE BRUNSILL

Davids, raised Spanish hopes as he began combining with Christian Panucci to turn the Juventus defence on its right. Yet with Zidane consistently drifting into dangerous areas Juventus seemed more likely to score in the opening period. Shortly before the quarter-hour Del Piero, receiving his own free-kick back from the defensive wall immediately laid the ball off

to Zidane, who shot into the side netting. After 18 minutes a free-kick at the other end gave Juventus their first fright of the night. Fernando Redondo tapped the ball back to Fernando Hierro, whose rising shot was tipped over the bar by Peruzzi. From the corner Mijatovic headed a fraction wide of the near post. Clearly something was stir-

ring in Real Madrid's soul, and after 26 minutes they should have been ahead. Gathering a pass from Redondo, Mijatovic side-stepped a lunging challenge from Moreno Torricelli and crossed low to the near post where Raul put the ball wide. A disappointment for Real, then, although the ease with which they had swung past the Juventus cover was heavy

with portent. As half-time approached, moreover, there were growing signs that Seedorf, Redondo and Christian Karembeu were beginning to curb the influence of Zidane. The second half saw Alessio Tacchinardi replacing Di Livio on the Juventus right but for a time the growing pattern for the first was unaltered. In the 62nd minute Real could so easily have fallen be-

hind. Zidane's free-kick took a deflection and the ball fell to Inzaghi inside the six-yard area with only Illgner barring the way, but he mis-hit his shot and the chance was gone. A costly miss, as events were soon to prove. In the 67th minute a shot from Roberto Carlos cannoned off a defender, the ball falling nicely for Mijatovic, who calmly dummied Peruzzi be-

fore hooking the ball into the net. Even as Real rejoiced Juventus should have drawn level, Inzaghi shooting wide from Del Piero's cross.

Juventus 14-3-1-2: Peruzzi; Torricelli, Montero, Juliene, Peruzzo; Di Livio (Tacchinardi, 46), Deschamps, Davids; Zlatanovic, Del Piero.
Real Madrid 14-3-1-2: Illgner; Panucci, Hierro, Sanchez, Roberto Carlos; Karembeu, Seedorf, Redondo; Raul (America, 50min), Mijatovic (Subar, 90), Morales (Laine, 82), Morientes (Krug, Germany).

Amateur loses status for ace

David Davies

DEREK LAWRENSON yesterday hit a golf shot which will change his entire life and that of his family. He had just won the Mill Ride course in Ayr and thereby earned £179,950 — or a Lamborghini Diablo.

The hole, the par-three 18th, is 190 yards long and had been insured against such a thing but Lawrenson's three-iron was always on target and, to the delight of 150 or so spectators, dropped in. The event, organised by the clubmakers TaylorMade, was an outing for the England football team before the rigours of the World Cup in France.

Lawrenson, who is the Sunday Telegraph's golf correspondent but also a Liverpool season-ticket holder, was playing with Paul Ince and Steve McManaman, and the former was almost as pleased as the perpetrator. "He kept coming up to me and saying 'I need a hug,'" said Lawrenson later.

Two versions of the car on offer, one black and one white, were on display at the hole and the winner will go to the Lamborghini showrooms in Reading next week to inspect them. He may instead turn his win into cash but either way his acceptance of the prize will cause him to lose his amateur status.

The Royal and Ancient says that the acceptance of a prize for an event of less than two rounds shall be no more than £200, and it would seem that a Lamborghini is a clear breach of that. As Lawrenson is going to accept either car or money, he will become a non-amateur and will not be able to play in club competitions of any kind.

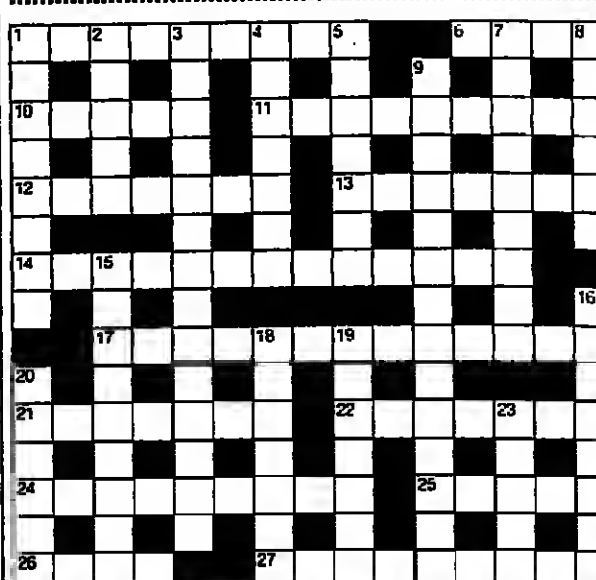
Lawrenson said yesterday: "I just have to accept. No one could afford to turn that kind of money down. If it had been a car worth, say, £15,000, then I might have thought about it, because at the age of 38 I've got a long time playing golf ahead of me."

"But we are talking family security for the rest of my life, and that must be worth more than any monthly medal."

Woolman Ryder bid, page 15

Guardian Crossword No 21,280

Set by Araucaria



Across

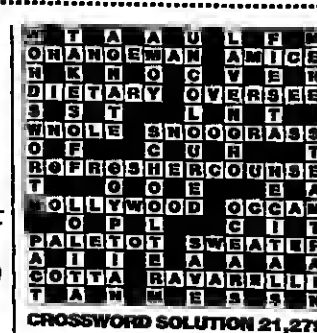
- 1 Repairing a gap, 252 clowns went on the stage (9)
- 6 See 26
- 10 Path or part (5)
- 11 Caring is affected (9)
- 12 Excursion to Scots river with little water by Spooner (3,4)
- 13 Nothing by ear from the river (7)
- 14 How French is French? Twice

English, say what you like (7,2,4)

- 17 Departed icon gets spin-doctoring — something nasty in the state (8,5)
- 21 A lot of letters, some of them champion (7)
- 22 Gild the letters with pleasure (7)
- 24 London borough with revolutionary connection (9)

Down

- 1 Standing room at the back for a fool to beauty (4,4)
- 2 Voluble little female angel? (5)
- 3 Put press and broadcasting underground — Conservative, making the connection (14)
- 4 Where's the pilot? Prepare to shoot mine (7)
- 5 Mixed gins at pub after "Time, gentlemen, please?" — Fielding next? (7,8,6)
- 7 Flower — a different one? A different one (9)
- 8 Classical (I say to myself) doctor (6)
- 9 See 5
- 15 Plan the ground for Dorset village (9)
- 16,20 Daft cares, daft cares — but 14 (Scott) (5,3,6)
- 18 Gorge on cheese (7)
- 19 Some correspondents send a sse — the other way it causes grief (7)
- 20 See 16
- 23 Pick up note on tilt (5)



CROSSWORD SOLUTION 21,279

Solution tomorrow

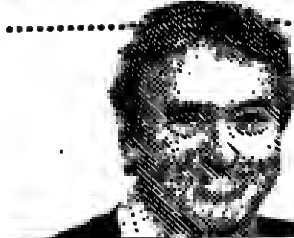
Stuck? Then call our solutions line on 0800 338 228. Calls cost 50p per minute at all times. Service supplied by ATS.



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ATSPST



Frank Keating

No time for Blair to try to be king of the swingers

IT WAS an apt cartoon by Nick Garland in yesterday's Daily Telegraph, following President Clinton's tutelage of the "brilliantly promising" golfing rabbit and protégé Tony Blair. The two were portrayed on the tee surveying the devilish hole ahead, with each bunker, water hazard, thick rough and impenetrable copse labelled: India, Ulster, Iran, China, Middle East, Indonesia and so on. Cosch Bill was saying to little greenhorn Tony: "Above all, remember to keep your head down."

After their round near

Chequers Clinton was ecstatic: "Tony said he'd never hit a golf ball, so I told him how to stand, how to swing. It was embarrassing how good he was... either he is an unbelievable athlete or I have a career as a golf instructor."

You have to take the President's word for it as no photographers were allowed — although a couple of shots taken blurrily through a faraway hedge suggest that the PM in his tight-fitting pastels and new Caesarish haircut did have a touch of the Bernard Gallaghers about him, except for the nervous-goalie bent knees. The Pres, by the way, was in a diamond-patterned sweater which reeked of Jack Nicklaus, circa 1977.

Golf has seldom figured in the British politician's bag, whereas it has been the *de rigueur* semi-official sport of the White House, as much a President's duty as plugging down the first pitch on the baseball season's opening day. At the turn of the century the White House's 27th incumbent (and 27-stoner) William Taft was regularly snapped swinging a club around his girth. At a rough count I reckon only Presidents Hoover, Truman and Jagan Jimmy Carter eschewed the great and confounded game. John Major, late on the up-take as ever, last week an-

nounced he was taking up golf so that he could play with George Bush on his hole next month. I suppose Bush was the second highest golf nut in the Oval Office after Dwight Eisenhower, whose swing was lauded by one brown-nosing aide as "gracefully grooved and rhythmic", although Bob Hope suggested he give up and try painting — "he'd need fewer strokes".

Richard Nixon played a smart game, too, but never lived down Sam Snead's accusation that he threw his ball out of a thickener without counting the stroke.

LONDON JOHNSON hacked around when he had to but demanded so many "mulligans" (free shots when he had missed) that they became part of his game. Bob Hope helped ruin Spiro Agnew's Vice-Presidency in 1971: "A great hole, he hit a birdie, an eagle, a moose, an elk and a Mason, and he can't cheat on his score 'cos you've just gotta look back down the fairway and count the wounded."

Beyond every good shot there is a cock-up, so no wonder wiser British premiers have mostly steered clear. Blair should be warned. Before photo-opportunities (and scornful comedians) existed, the Tory PM Balfour played

off six — at North Berwick each recess and the Liberal Asquith was also hot stuff on the links at Archerfield, next to Muirfield.

Harold Macmillan preferred shooting animals in Scotland. Lloyd George, typically, would dare a swipe off the first if a cameraman was around; so would Harold Wilson, who mostly played pitch-and-putt stuff to give his labour Paddy a run.

Like Major, Stanley Baldwin, Clem Attlee and Alec Douglas-Home were all besotted cricket nuts — much safer to stay in the pavilion. Heath was an ocean sailor on Morning Cloud; then it sank and so did he. Thatcher was so cluelessly unporty that she wore an all-royal blue outfit when she went to Glasgow to present a cup to Celtic.

The nearest real golfer to No. 10 since Balfour in 1916 was Thatcher's deputy PM Willie Whitelaw, golfing Blue and captain of the R & A. He took a rest from the links one day, changed his plus-fours and went to bag a few grouse — and enraged spying Fleet Street and hence the nation when he persuaded his bodyguard to shoot a bird with his police pistol.

Blair, as Willie should have, should stick to what he knows. Golf would find him out in no time.

SHIPPING MATCH.

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These t Anne Si



Age

One day with... made... women... sister's

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Pupil's talk of everyone's had

Christopher Reed in Los Angeles

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